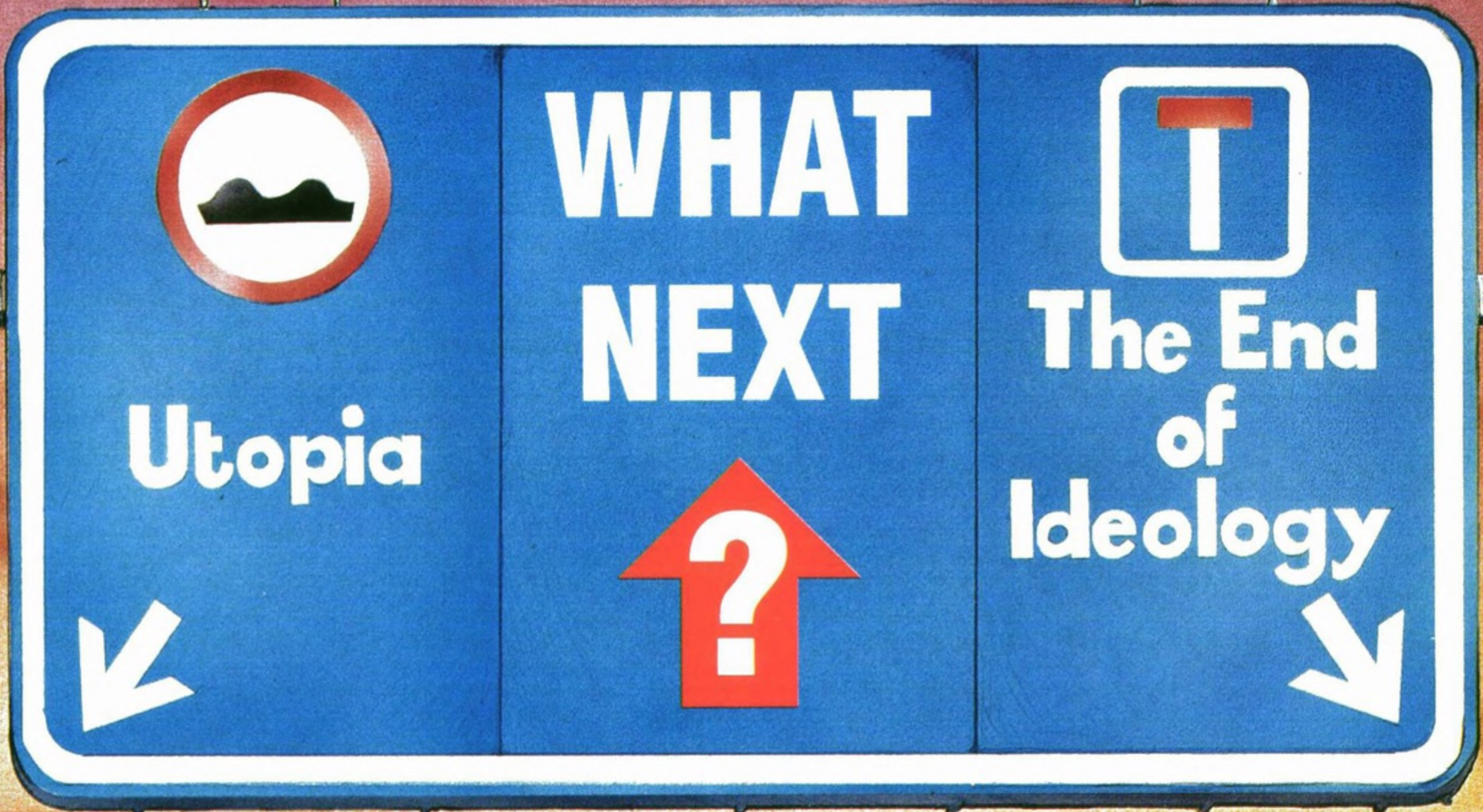
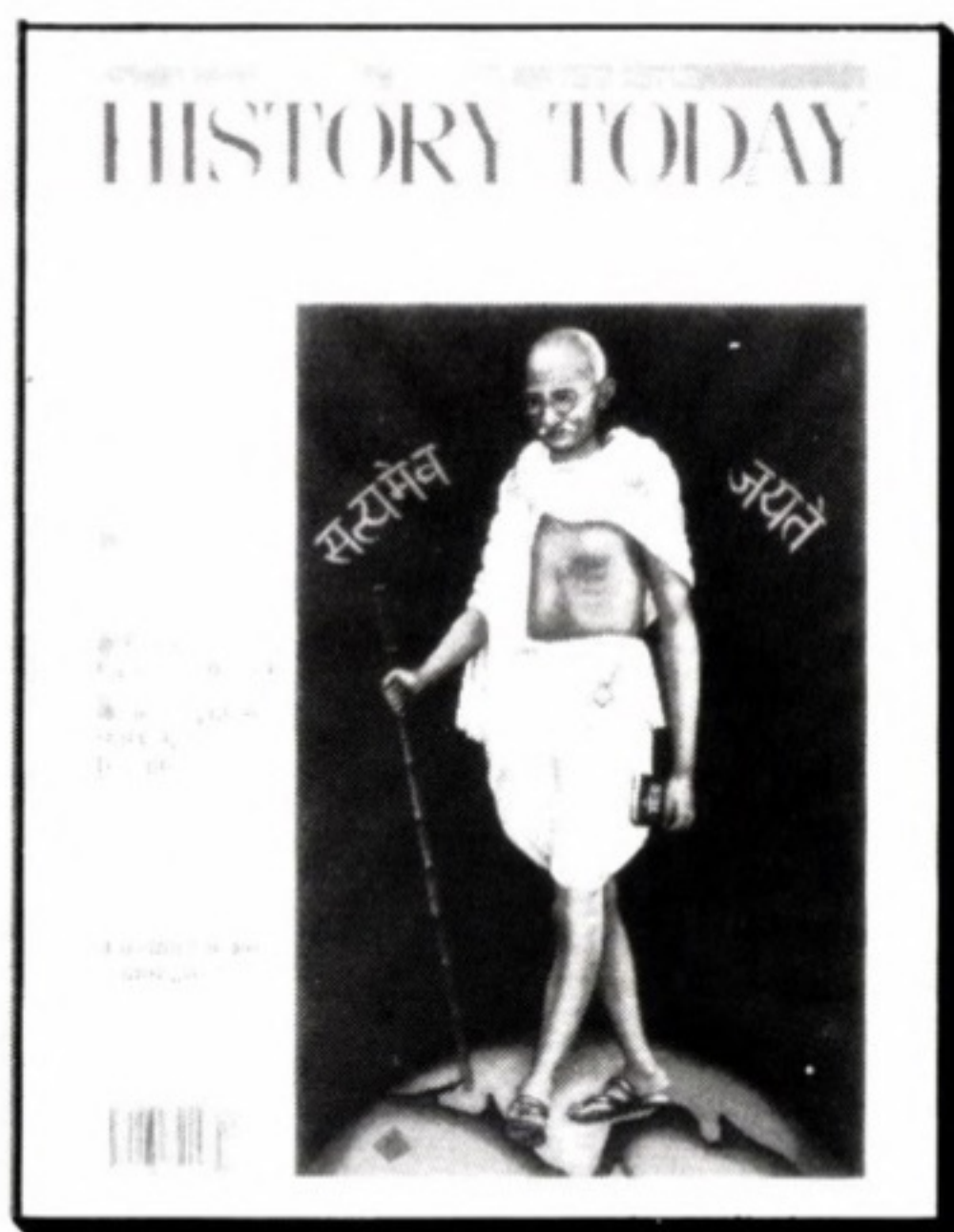


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The **NI** magazine is edited, produced and sold by New Internationalist Publications Ltd which is co-operatively run by:-

Vanessa Baird, Chris Brazier, Wayne Ellwood, Alan Hughes, Guy Montgomery, Gill Moore, Clive Offley, David Ransom, James Rowland, Sue Shaw, Kate Stott, Richard Swift, Dexter Tiranti, Troth Wells.

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EDITORIAL AND ADVERTISING OFFICES

UK: 55 Rectory Road, Oxford OX4 1BW. Tel. (0865) 728181. Fax. (0865) 793152.

Canada: 1011 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ontario M6H 1M1. Tel. (416) 923 9857.

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MAILINGS

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Cover and UK inside pages printed by Pindar Graphics, Scarborough, North Yorkshire.

North American inside pages printed in Canada by Webcom, Scarborough, Ontario.

The **NI** is distributed to the UK news trade by AGB Impress, 22-26 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. Tel. (071) 253 3456. Fax. (071) 608 0726.

The **NI** in North America (USPS 329-770) is published monthly by New Internationalist Publications, 1011 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6H 1M1 with assistance from the Canadian International Development Agency. US 2nd class postage paid at Lewiston, NY. US Post-master send address changes to: The **NI**, P O Box 1143, Lewiston, NY 14092. US Office of Publication, Lewiston, NY 14092. Registered with Alternative Press Index.

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Violence against women, including assault, genital mutilation, rape, battering, murder, infanticide and cruel neglect, is perhaps the most pervasive yet least recognised human rights issue in the world. It is also a profound health problem sapping women's physical and emotional vitality and undermining their confidence. These have spurred a group of women in Nigeria to develop a project aimed at women who are facing rising levels of sexual violence, physical assault, destitution and disease threats, whether from traditional practices such as female genital mutilation, force feeding and childhood marriage; brutal abuse of wives and children; lack of shelter for homeless, elderly and destitute women; the widespread threat of AIDS amongst women.

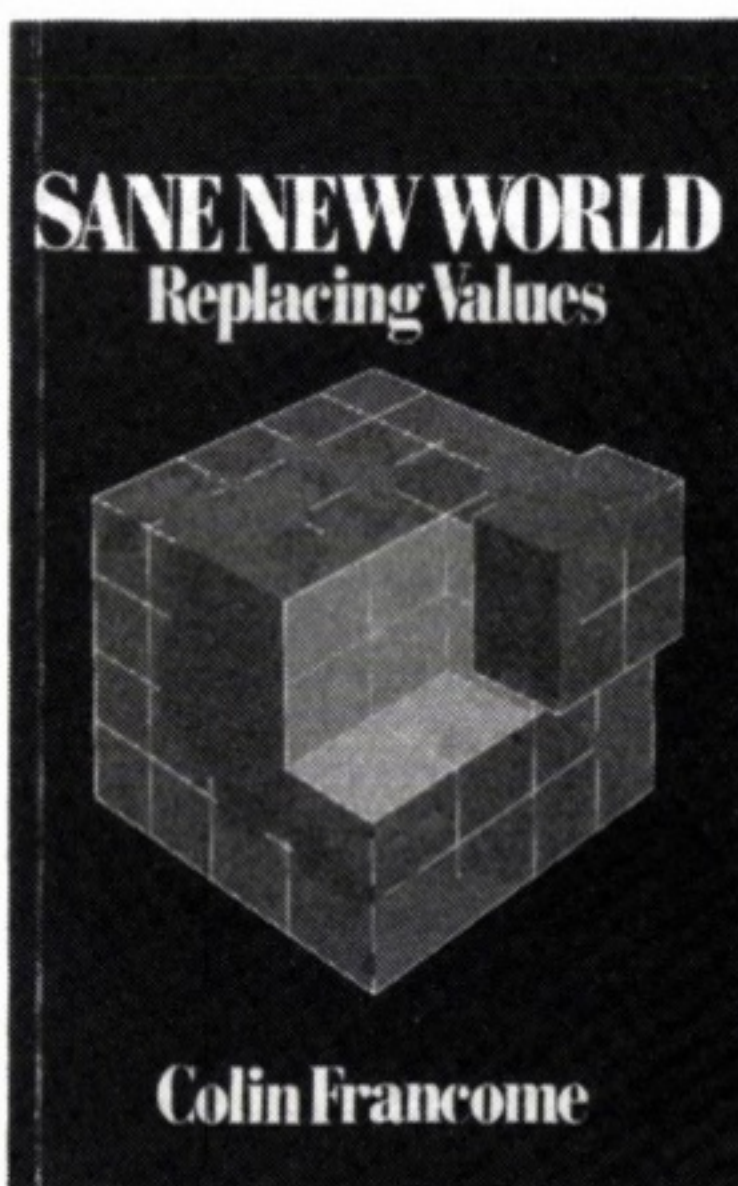
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It was a Tuesday afternoon last summer. I was a nervous wreck. By Wednesday afternoon I'd have to present my proposal for an issue of the **NI** on ideology. That meant ideas, and I didn't have any. Not a single one.

I'd just been to a conference on 'Utopia' in London to mark the centenary of the publication of William Morris' *News from Nowhere*. We dreamt our way through workshops on the history of dreaming and convened for the final plenary. It began with a long debate about whether one of the speakers, Tony Benn, should put out the pipe he was smoking (he won the argument, I think, but he put out his pipe anyway). It ended with a minstrel singing rousing songs from the platform while from the back of the hall came shouts from the caretaker: 'You're way past your time! I want to get home for my tea! Everybody out!'

Wherever I turned I came up against what you might call Anglo-Saxon 'Dirty Realism', the same anti-intellectual scorn for ideas. What are they? Where do they come from? Do they matter? Hard to say,

if you haven't got any. And, that Tuesday afternoon, I hadn't.

I decided to stay calm, to employ what we members of the amateur thinking trade call the 'Don't Panic Tactic'. What I needed was someone sufficiently unlike me to take the blame if my magazine went wrong, but sufficiently like me for me to take the credit if it went right. I found Fred Z.

Or rather, he found me. He sprang out of my imagination – offering me himself, a day in his mind, as a device for looking at ideas and ideology.

Before I could stop him he'd set about breaking all the few rules we have for this magazine. He put the end of the world at the beginning, grabbed the 'Keynote' for himself and put it at the end, and placed the future firmly in the middle. He went to a remote Greek island to have his portrait painted by Korky Paul. He got photographs taken of **NI** staff members holding Tarot cards against pieces of garden furniture. He had designers cutting up precious jewels of text as if they were bits of spaghetti. He showed flagrant disregard for my budget. And he had me tied to a fax machine for days on end (will the Mayor of Lauchhammer please plug in his machine at his earliest convenience?!). Never was editorial control more comprehensively lost.

And now he's had the nerve to ask me

to give you a message. He won't leave me alone even here, the last outpost of my editorial prerogative. Oh well, in for a penny ...

He says, would you please try to read his magazine from start to finish, in that order, you know, beginning at the beginning and ending at the end, that sort of thing. I tell him you never do that. He says you might enjoy it more if you did.

You see, he has this quaint notion that it's a story; that it shows how her/history goes on, just like life, whatever anyone might try to tell us to the contrary about it coming to an end.

Well, I'm afraid that in one sense, Fred, it does. I've now got to take my leave of you. I have my own life to lead too, you know! I shall miss you, and Beth, Alice, Henry, all the other shadowy figures in your life who have been my constant companions for the past few months. You dug me out of a bit of a hole. It's been great fun.

David Ransom.

David Ransom
for the New Internationalist Co-operative

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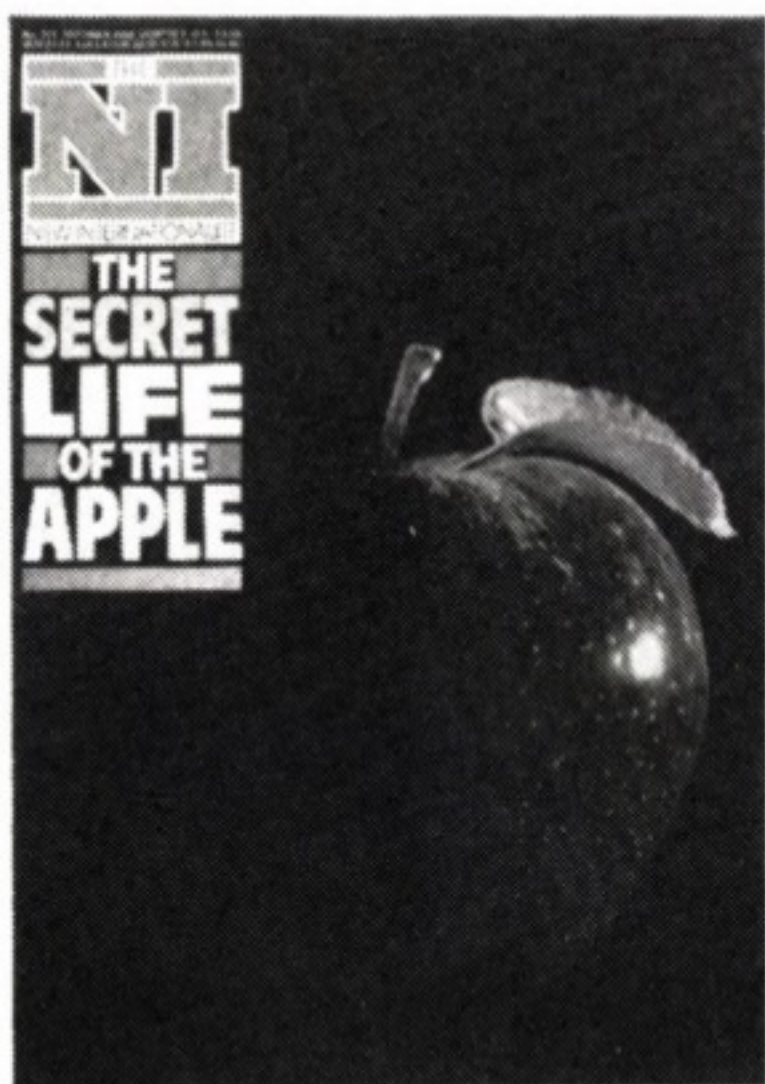
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Sexy pears

But why the apple rather than anything else? (*The secret life of the apple* NI 212) OK, so the pear didn't make it to the Garden of Eden but the Romans worshipped it as an aphrodisiac, and consecrated it to Venus, Goddess of Love. They also grew pears as a



source of medicine. And in old England people used pears as a disinfectant by rubbing the cut flesh on an infection. My guess is that you could dig up wacky facts about any animal, fruit or mineral you choose to look at. But is that enough reason to do a magazine about them? Perhaps your next issue should be about the arbitrariness of categories.

Sheila Mane
London, UK

Royal respect

Your comments on royalty in NI 211 (*Classic*) seem designed to reduce respect for our monarchy. I esteem the devoted service given by our royal family because they provide high standards clear of petty politics in an age when voluntary respect for authority – which is the foundation for democratic peace and social discipline – has been seriously undermined. Too many families fail to get this over to their children and teachers are often left with too little energy for teaching after gaining class control.

Colonel DTW Gibson MBE,
Isle of Wight, UK

Lydia's call

Thank you on behalf of the City of London Anti-

NI welcomes your letters. But please keep them short. They may be edited for purposes of space or clarity. Include a home telephone number if possible and send your letters to the nearest editorial office. The address is inside the front cover.

Apartheid Group for the article that appeared about the Uppington 26 Campaign (*Endpiece* NI 210). Last month we phoned Lydia and were shocked to hear that the Appeal against the convictions of the prisoners had been postponed, condemning them to another nine months in prison – until May 1991.

On a happier note however, one of the group called Eveline de Bruin, is being transferred to the 'local' prison at Kimberley. This concession would not have happened but for pressure brought to bear on the authorities. Lydia asks me to pass her thanks to everyone who has contributed so generously to the campaign and says that while little has changed in the way of living conditions for the prisoners and their families, the campaigners are confident of their victory.

Jacky Smith
City of London
Anti-Apartheid Group
London, UK

Emasculated Bible

In your editorial article on fundamentalism (*Reaching for certainty* NI 210) you suggest that because people fail to live up to standards, the doctrine should be changed. One of the problems in the Church today is caused by this very philosophy. If the Bible says something that is inconvenient or difficult to follow, it is rejected as not relevant to the modern world. One after

another biblical truths and standards are thrown out and we are left with an emasculated Bible and an emasculated Christian faith where anything goes. But the answer to failure and sin is not to move the goalposts but to repent and try again. Let Christ really be Lord of all your life and not just of some of it.

Jim Heber
Bath, UK

Marx-imising success

I have difficulty linking Marxists with religious fundamentalists (NI 210). Fundamentalism is a belief system that cannot be refuted because it comes from a supreme being. Marxism is not a cast-iron belief system but an argument against the mainstream of accepted political-economic ideology. Marxists defend the right of all to practise religion, and the right to criticize religion, which is hardly a fundamentalist standpoint. The main plank of Leninism is an organizational structure which will allow the best arguments in society to be aired and the argument that has most support to be taken as policy. There is no prescribed text to adhere to.

AWR Burgess
London, UK

Fanatical madness

I was interested that your issue *The fear of madness* (NI 209) was followed by one on

Fundamentalism (NI 210) because they are certainly connected. I know this from personal experience: my father acts 'schizophrenic'. He hears voices, acts on orders from above and has delusions of grandeur – he thinks he is the second coming of Christ. Traditionally one would not apply the 'schizophrenic' diagnosis to other religious fanatics, but why not? It is surely just another kind of mental disease. Escaping into dogma has not helped my father deal with his mental dis-ease. Society doesn't recognize his pain, hidden behind the walking Bible he has become. The pity is my father is not alone in his excessive use of religion.

Marewa Glover
Te Awamutu, Aotearoa

Fit of rage

I was dismayed to see epilepsy included under 'Madness – The Facts' (*The fear of madness* NI 209). People with epilepsy are *not* mad. Epilepsy does occur in some cases as a symptom of brain damage, but for it to be classified alongside psychosis, mental retardation and other disorders, without qualification, only serves to reinforce the stigma of insanity that health organizations worldwide are trying to eradicate. Nazi eugenics lumped epilepsy with mental disorders. But I hope we live in a more enlightened age.

Tracy Moir
West London Action for
Epilepsy Group,
London, UK

Burning sheep

French farmers recently sought to protect their markets by setting fire to a lorry load of live sheep being exported from Britain for slaughter in an abattoir in mid-France. It was the latest in a series of atrocities integral to the live export trade. Last year over half a million sheep were exported from the UK for death in foreign abattoirs and the numbers are set to increase. Many animals die from trauma en route. Their suffering is totally unnecessary when they could easily be slaughtered near the farm



of production. *Compassion in World Farming* is approaching the final stages of an international petition to the European Parliament, seeking proper protection for animals. If readers are interested they should send a stamped addressed envelope for details to *Compassion in World Farming*, 20 Lavant St., Petersfield, Hampshire, UK.

Peter Roberts, Director,
Compassion in World Farming,
Petersfield, UK

Authoritative words

With reference to your Country Profile on Papua New Guinea (NI 208) the constitution of this country does not recognize any language as the official language.

The *de facto* official languages are: English, Tok Pisin and Hiri Motu.

Julie Piau
Toronto, Canada

Steps forward

As a professional working in the field of disabled welfare for the past 12 years, I take issue with your article on the disabled in India by Dinyar Godrej (*Tea, charity, pain and performance* NI 207).

Disability is no longer a 'non-issue' in India. Anyone who has kept track of developments in this field would notice a dramatic change in the Government's approach. It is planning comprehensive legislation for the disabled, encompassing their education, training, employment and

right of equal participation. Blind and deaf people have also been recruited for certain jobs in central government, and a number of state governments have reserved a percentage of jobs for the disabled. Various funding agencies including Sight Savers are promoting integrated education enabling blind and sighted children to accept and adjust to each other.

Bushan Punani,
Rehabilitation Consultant
Sight Savers, India

Conservation swap

Global pollution could be more effectively tackled if countries would share their conservation ideas. In Japan, for example, garbage cans have covers with special holes

in them to separate soft drinks cans from other rubbish, so that they can be re-cycled. But few Japanese beverage companies yet make drinks-cans with tab openers that remain attached to the cans – even though companies in the US and Canada have been manufacturing these for almost 15 years. And most countries should benefit from copying the few nations who have introduced legislation banning companies from manufacturing drinks-cans in two different metals – as this makes recycling harder.

Joan Kabayama, Educator
Ottawa and Tokyo.



The views expressed on the letters pages are not necessarily those of the NI.

LETTER FROM LA PAZ

The food donation game

Every young mother wants to join a club in Bolivia. Susanna Rance reveals the attraction.

THE first thing I heard about mothers' clubs was that you had to pay a fine if you missed a meeting. Funny sort of club, I thought, for women who had very little cash to start off with. All my neighbours on our hillside shanty town with kids under five took time away from their chores for the weekly session.

Juana took me along, babe on her back, a toddler in tow. We puffed up the hill to the church hall, an adobe hut with a firmly padlocked door. A row of women were huddled against the wall on the dusty ground, wide skirts spread around them, shawls pinned tight against the sharp wind. Knitting needles and spindles kept their cold hands in motion as they muttered together in Aymara, their low tones punctuated by a gusty laugh or a child's cry.

The register was called and the women continued to while away the chilly afternoon leaving their homes and market stalls untended. What were they waiting for? Donated foods were supposed to be arriving some time, no-one knew quite when.

The women had set up this mothers' club on the initiative of a local leader who said they could qualify for monthly rations of flour, oil and powdered milk if they formed a regular group. It was not a new idea: mothers' clubs have been a feature of Bolivian life since the mid-sixties, and there are now over 5,000 of them scattered throughout the country. The brainchild of a US aid agency, Catholic Relief Services, they were conceived as a humanitarian way of off-loading US agricultural surpluses, keeping Northern farmers happy and getting food to the needy in Latin America's poorest countries.

But the donations have strings firmly attached. As well as charging regular fees, some agencies impose obligatory activities such as embroidery and cake-making, and they forbid club members to join local organizations. A rigid hierarchical structure fosters passivity, dependency and corruption. Trafficking with donated foods is commonplace. Powdered milk is hawked on the streets in bags stamped

'not for re-sale', going far cheaper than the nationally produced brand.

Food aid comes under fire from many quarters. It competes unfairly with national agriculture: while Bolivia was once self-sufficient in wheat production, 90 per cent of the grain consumed nowadays is brought in from the US. Donations change people's eating habits and get them used to less nutritious and dearer imports. But critics point to another side-effect – the undermining of grass-roots organizations. Having become used to getting something for attending meetings, women in impoverished shanty towns and rural areas are now reluctant to participate in community development schemes unless food is promised.

Leocadia, a literacy worker, told me how numbers have dropped in her women's group. 'Most organizations around here offer food aid, and we can't compete,' she said. 'We've lost a lot of people to the Adventists' Food for Work scheme. The women go out digging ditches and paving roads in exchange for their rations. They don't have much choice with the situation like it is and their husbands out of work.'

Catholic Relief officials now admit to being unsure of the donations' real impact. They feel their role as 'sponsor' has become outmoded and hampers the growth of autonomous local organizations. After thirty years in the food aid business, this relief agency is pulling out and handing over distribution to local Catholic agencies in Bolivia and neighbouring Peru.

What do women themselves have to say? Much as they may need subsidized foods, many are getting fed up with quotas, rules and regulations, and with the power held by those controlling the handouts. 'We don't get the food free, we always have to pay something for it,' complained Natalia. 'Then, they give us things like bulgur wheat that we don't normally use. A lot of that ends up as chicken feed.'

One women's centre tried in vain to mobilize against the donations. They wisely shifted their focus and organized a committee of food aid recipients, training leaders to raise awareness about the causes and effects of the problem, and campaigning for a better deal from the donating agencies.

'If the agencies want to help us, all right,' says committee leader Julia Lopez, a recent migrant to La Paz from a mining community. 'But we should be allowed to handle the food distribution ourselves, through our own organizations. They think they can keep us quiet with this stuff they send, but why don't they pay us a decent price for our minerals? We don't see this system of food aid as a gift, but as another kind of exploitation.'

Susanna Rance has lived and worked in Bolivia for several years.





WHAT NEXT?

Ideas, ideology and the future

One day in the mind of
Fred Z, NI subscriber and
optimist. A profile of Fred
by David Ransom.
(Cartoons by Korky Paul.)

one at all.

This is a load of bunk. Capitalism is just as much an ideology as socialism. And as for 'history' coming to an end, even Francis Fukuyama, the US State

Our ideas and hopes for the future are the stuff of life. We can't seem to do without them.

But 'endism' is in vogue. According to this fashionable theory the end of the Cold War is also the 'end of history'. The idea is that because capitalism has defeated its only serious rival, socialism, ideology is redundant, dead, even a dirty word. So President Bush now says that what was wrong with the Soviet Union was not the nature of its ideology, but the fact that it had

Department official who dreamed up 'endism', has his doubts. He believes that 'the prospect of boredom at the end of history will serve to get history started again'.¹

The opinions of technocrats and world leaders get plenty of attention. NI prefers to spend the day with Fred Z – an unremarkable person living through a not particularly eventful day. We see how he's shaping up to the 'new age' ahead, and offer some thoughts of our own.

THAT'S him, there in the centre of our artist's impression of his household. Right now, if you asked him 'what next?' he'd probably say 'the hoovering'.

He lives in a large provincial town with his second partner Beth, their small son Henry, and Alice, his teenage daughter by a previous marriage.

Fred craves meat, smokes but doesn't drink alcohol. Beth works part-time as a physiotherapist at the local hospital and is extremely fit. She is often on a diet and, like young Henry, has a passion for McDonalds hamburgers. Alice is an anti-smoking vegetarian who is already too fond of red wine.

By and large they all get on very well together. It's the kind of household people like to visit and often do. But Fred finds it hard to take a 'line' on anything, from pets to ethical shopping and which TV programme to watch. So he's in a bit of ideological bother even before he steps out of his front door.

He may look a bit feeble to you, but underneath he's a man of principle. He doesn't just mess with ideas. He puts them into practice too. That makes him a busy and slightly battered person. He was once a Hunt Saboteur and still has a dent in his buttocks to prove it.

He's an active trade unionist and a good neighbour. 'Socialistic' rather than socialist, he tells himself he would belong to a political party if he could just find the right one to join.

He doesn't get much time for reflection, and when he does he tends to get depressed. He's an enthusiast. He doesn't just hope for the best in other people – he genuinely believes in it. But he's not above making furtive preparations for the worst.

A faintly comical figure, he fears

ridicule above all else. He has the ability to infuriate other people for (to him) no apparent reason at all.

For Fred, solidarity between people is a matter of plain common sense rather than ideological preference. If he has 'style' he doesn't know where it came from or what it is. Only in retrospect does he think he might qualify as a 'new man', a supporter of causes from which he is excluded by his situation – feminism, the Third World, anti-racism, gay rights. So he lives with a lurking fear of exposure as a fraud. He thinks this keeps him on his mettle, but it often leaves him at a loss for the right word.

Amiable and well-liked, he is basically a happy man who gets intense pleasure from his senses every day – from sunlight on his back, the scent of fresh coffee and the company of others. You must not think him ridden with *angst* just because, for once, he's agreed to discuss with us the things he normally ignores.

But he doesn't even try to ignore a deep, child-like, abiding rage. Poverty, cruelty and injustice literally make him feel sick. He finds himself at odds with a 'world order' he thinks of as noisy, dirty, ruthless, cruel, narrow-minded, increasingly uniform and joyless.

He reckons it's only because he loves the world and the people he knows that he hates the prevailing 'world order'. He sees his life as some kind of a preparation for the day when the George Bushes and Margaret Thatchers of this world are dispatched to refine their political beliefs on welfare benefits in an urban slum.

He teaches history at the local state school. He has a passion for the subject and its relevance to contemporary events. His pet topics are the Byzantine Empire and the Crusades. He feels personally vin-

dicated by the demise of all imperial adventures, the defeat of fascism and the disproof of the fundamental tenets of apartheid.

He always thought of the Cold War as a deal between cynical power brokers and military-industrial magnates with money to make from mega-deaths. You can decree an end to the Cold War, but not to the arms manufacturers like Lockheed. How will they live without it? Where will they turn for new markets? Fred, a child of the Cold War, is uneasy about the future, particularly for his children.

He thinks that great opportunities lie ahead, but vested interests, built on the status quo, are trying to keep them out of reach. He sees the East European revolutions of 1989 as disproving the need for revolutionary violence. They could happen anywhere and very well might. He thinks there's more to 'democracy' than voting for someone else.

He reckons that the politics of mutual extermination could indeed have run their course, and the opportunity to tackle the most pressing issues of the 1990s – poverty and the destruction of the environment – is finally within reach.

But Chinese philosophy (well, the odd book about it, anyway) tells him that great opportunity and great danger are two sides of the same coin. He fears we may fall to disenchantment, bad old habits, national chauvinism, racist frenzy – or 'endism'.

He can sense the options as they come and go, day by day. As he sees it, the Gulf crisis of August 1990 united the United Nations on a major world issue for the first time in its history. But the US (with the UK in tow) shaped up for war with Iraq and steamed off to the Gulf to protect their own interests, saying that they were doing so on behalf of the whole world.

An aid worker in Jordanian refugee camps couldn't get a TV crew from the West interested in tens of thousands of people from the 'Third World' who are about to die from starvation – all the crews were off watching Richard Branson pick up a couple of hundred westerners in one of his Virgin Jumbo Jets. Hundreds of thousands of people from the Philippines, India, Bangladesh, Egypt, right across the 'south' kept Kuwait (and much of the rest of the Gulf) thriving. Few people in the West knew or cared very much if they did. As always, it is the poor who pay the price of conflict – and there can be no end to conflict in a world where the 'have-nots' outnumber the 'haves' by four to one.

Fred reckons there's never been a clearer example of what he means. Without a genuine and effective United Nations and a new vision to go with it there is no prospect of a better world order or of identifying and tackling the major world issues. With the United Nations there is at least the *opportunity to start*, to work together in new ways on issues that really matter.

Such as global warming – and the West



Half the people in the Third World have no secure home, one sixth go hungry every day.



using less of the oil that the Gulf crisis is actually all about. Perhaps, he thinks, this has finally brought us to our senses. The prospect of environmental catastrophe has shown us how fragile life is, how interdependent we all are, how difficult it is going to be to find our way out – and how important ideas are going to be in the task of finding it.

Yet he is required to hand over his children's future to the 'non-ideological' market forces he thinks are largely responsible for getting us all into this mess in the first place.

Given this choice, he reckons there's a balance to be tipped, in favour of the opportunities and against the dangers. His ideas are all he has to do it with. And the only way these can make a difference is if he shares them, tests them out, listens to other ideas and looks for ways to put them into practice.

As luck would have it we've chosen a bad day to join him. He's had one of his rare vivid nightmares; the sort that has him lying rigid in bed, blind eyes wide open, yelling 'No! No! No!' at the ceiling, Beth trying grumpily to reassure him and

shut him up. It lingers on into the first moments of his wakefulness, leaving him unsure what world he's really in.

Fred has two kinds of nightmare. In one he's in a lift that doesn't stop at the top but keeps going into a world of claustrophobia and vertigo.

In the other, the sort he's just woken from, he becomes an eyewitness to terrible events he's seen on TV. In this way he has lived in Nazi Germany or sat beside a small girl in Vietnam who gazes into the distance with a fixed stare and cries into the silence with a monotonous, elemental shriek. (He has also lived through a revolution and it was hell, but he keeps quiet about that). The nightmare feels quite different from what he's seen on TV – but he thinks it is closer to the truth.

This time he's been wearing protective clothing. Whether it's against poison gas or pollution or radiation he can't say. All he hears is his own breathing and the rustle of the shrouds around him, like flapping bats. He can't touch or smell. He tries to shout but makes no noise. Another shrouded figure comes up to him and rips the clothing off. He's in a white-tiled room.

But prosaic language can't capture or convey the experience. He has to turn to poetry. Waiting for the kettle to boil he grabs a pencil and begins to scribble on the back of an old envelope...

The queue²

*...Then I was taken from that room
I didn't recognize.*

*They marched me through
the gates to my grandmother's old school
and I found myself in a bare street.
Dust lay on the lintels*

*and dust filled
bird's prints, typed in the concrete.
There was a sound from inside the houses*

*of wings dragging in the dust.
I tried walking but was held
by a terror of turning the corner.*

*There was a shop sign
that said 'Irkalla'.
This somehow held the terror.*

*The corner turned itself
and I faced three women
in a queue.*

*I thought I knew them,
gasmasks bubbled on their heads
like mice without ears,
and they were draped*

*and gloved in black
blown with grey dust.*

*That dream's own terror
came on me there:*

*I clapped my ribs
and shouted
and their deaf heads
were turning from my nakedness ...*

A cup of coffee in bed for Beth – he always brings her one and fears it would all be over with her if he ever stopped. Bath, shave, teeth, relief, groans, another coffee, Henry's dinner money, where's Alice (was she home when he went to sleep last night?), mail, radio news, feed the cats, wash, dress, briefcase, wake up! wake up! □

1 This is the concluding sentence of the article 'The End of History' by Francis Fukuyama, which first appeared in *The National Interest*, Summer 1989. 2 Poem by WN Herbert.



COMMUTING



He's late. To commute: to transform, to change utterly: what a way to describe the daily grind! Fred makes for the door. A barricade of junk mail. But hold hard. The **NI**'s there. 'What Next?' Good question. Eduardo Galeano. *The Open Veins of Latin America*. Read the book years ago. Changed Fred's mind. Memories of fire. Wonder what he thinks now?



The other wall

The view from the South. Eduardo Galeano looks north, over the high wall of power, and finds contempt disguised as destiny at 'the end of history'.

The end of history? That's nothing new for us. Five centuries ago Europe decreed that in America memory and dignity were crimes. The new owners of these lands banned the remembrance and the making of history. All we have been permitted to do since is to accept it.



Dark skins, white wigs, crowns of lights, cloaks of silk and jewels: at the Rio de Janeiro carnival the starving dream together and for a while are Kings and Queens. For four days the most musical people in the world live out their collective delirium. And on Ash Wednesday, at midday, the party is over. The police arrest anyone who stays in disguise. The poor take off their feathers and paint, rip off the visible masks, the masks that unmask, the masks of fleeting freedom, and put on different, invisible masks, negating the human face: the masks of routine, obedience and misery. Until the next carnival, the Queens go back to washing dishes and the Princes to sweeping the streets.

They sell newspapers they cannot read, sew clothes they cannot wear, polish cars they will never own and construct buildings where they will never live. With their cheap arms they present cheap products to the world market.

They made Brasilia, and from Brasilia they were thrown out. They make Brazil, day after day, and Brazil is their land of exile.

They cannot make history. They are condemned to suffer it.



The end of history. Time has been pensioned off, the world has stopped turning. Tomorrow is another name for today. The places at the table are set, and Western civilization denies no-one the right to beg for crumbs.

Ronald Reagan wakes up one day and says: 'The Cold War is over. We've won'. Francis Fukuyama, a functionary in the US State Department, achieves sudden fame and success by discovering that the end of the Cold War is also the end of history. In the name of liberal democracy, capitalism becomes the last port of call for all journeys, 'the final form of human government'.

Hours of glory. The class struggle no longer exists, and to the East there are no longer enemies but allies. The free market and the consumer society have won universal consensus, no more than delayed by the historical diversion of the communist mirage. Just as the French Revolution wanted it we are now all free, equal and fraternal. And property owners too. Kingdom of greed, paradise on Earth.

Like God, capitalism has the highest opinion of itself and has no doubts about its own immortality.



Welcome to the fall of the Berlin Wall! So says the Peruvian diplomat Carlos Alzamora in a recent article; but the other wall, the wall that



Rio Carnival: four days of fleeting freedom.

Photo : Elliott Erwitt/Magnum

Photo : Susan Meiselas/Magnum



Sleeping with one eye open: guards arrest migrant labourers on the US-Mexican border, where entry is only allowed at harvest time.

separates the poor world from the opulent world, is higher than ever. A universal apartheid: racism, intolerance and discrimination erupt increasingly in Europe, punishing all intruders who scale the wall to reach the citadel of prosperity.

It's plain to see. The Berlin Wall has died a timely death. But it lived no more than 30 years. The other wall will soon be celebrating its fifth centenary. Unequal exchange, financial extortion, capital bleeding away, monopoly over technology and information, cultural alienation – these are the bricks that build up day by day, as wealth and sovereignty drain ever faster from the South to the North of the world.



Money works in the opposite way to people; the freer it gets, the worse it becomes. Economic neo-liberalism, imposed by the North on the South as 'the end of history', as the only and ultimate system, consecrates oppression under the banner of freedom. In the free market the victory of the strong is natural and the annihilation of the weak is legitimate. Racism rises to the status of economic doctrine. The North confirms divine justice: God rewards the chosen people and castigates the inferior races, condemned by their biological make-up to violence and inefficiency. In a single day, a worker from the North earns more than a worker from the South can in half a month.



Starvation wages, low costs, ruinous world market prices.

Sugar is one of the Latin American products condemned to instability and

decline. For many years there was just one exception: the Soviet Union paid (and still does) a reasonable price for Cuba's sugar. Now, in its euphoria, capitalism triumphant rubs its hands with glee. There are plenty of signs that this exemplary exception shows how to create a new, fairer international order, an alternative to the systematic plunder called 'deteriorating terms of trade' by the technicians. No: if the Soviets still pay a good price for Cuban sugar, that only goes to show the diabolical designs that guided Moscow's steps, poking its nose in where it did not belong, in the days when it sported horns, a trident and a tail.

The prevailing order is the only possible one: thieving commerce is the end of history.



Unwelcome intruders in New York's citadel.

Preoccupied by cholesterol, hunger long forgotten, the North nonetheless practises charity. Mother Theresa of Calcutta is more efficient than Karl Marx. Aid given by the North to the South is much less than the alms solemnly pledged before the United Nations, but it allows the North to dump its war junk, its surplus goods and development projects that underdevelop the South and spread the haemorrhage to cure the anaemia.

Meanwhile, over the last five years, the South has donated to the North an infinitely larger sum, the equivalent of two Marshall Plans at constant prices, in the form of interest payments, profits, royalties and all kinds of colonial tribute. And meanwhile, the creditor banks of the North have gutted the debtor states of the South and ended up owning our public sector in exchange for nothing.

Just as well that imperialism does not exist. No one mentions it any more, therefore it does not exist. That history, too, has ended.



But, if empires and their colonies have come to rest behind glass in the museum of antiquities, why are the dominant countries still armed to the teeth? Because of the Soviet threat? Not even the Soviets believe that alibi anymore. If the Iron Curtain has melted away and the bad guys of yesterday are the good guys of today, why do the powerful continue to manufacture and sell weapons and fear?

The budget of the US Air Force exceeds the total of the budgets for the education of all children in the so-called Third World. A waste of resources? Or resources to defend waste? Could the

Photo : Bruce Davidson/Magnum

unequal organization of the world, which pretends to be eternal, be sustained a single day longer if the countries and the social classes that have bought up the world disarmed?

This system, sick with consumerism and arrogance, which launched so voraciously into the destruction of land, sea, air and sky, now mounts guard at the foot of the high wall of power. It sleeps with one eye open, and with good reason.

The end of history is its message of death. The system that sanctifies a cannibalistic international order tells us: 'I am everything. After me, nothingness'.



From a computer screen, the fate of millions of human beings is being decided. In the era of super-enterprises and super-technology, some are merchants, others are merchandise.



Fat cats at the London commodity exchanges, gambling with the lives of Third World people.

The magic of the market fixes the value of things and people. Latin American products are worth less every day. So are we, the Latin Americans.

The Pope in Rome forcefully

condemned the brief blockade, or threatened blockade, of Lithuania. But the Holy Father has never uttered a word against the blockade of Cuba, now in its thirtieth year, or of Nicaragua, which lasted a decade. That's normal. And it's normal, too, that since we Latin Americans are worth so little while still alive, then the value placed on our dead should be a hundred times less than on the victims of the now disintegrated Evil Empire. Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman have taken the trouble to measure the space we merit in the leading North American media. Jerzy Popieluszko, the priest murdered by state terror in Poland in 1984, took up more space than the sum total of 100 priests murdered by state terror in Latin America in recent years.

They have imposed contempt on us as a custom. Now they sell us contempt as destiny.



The South learns its geography from world maps which reduce it to half its actual size. Will future maps blot it out altogether?

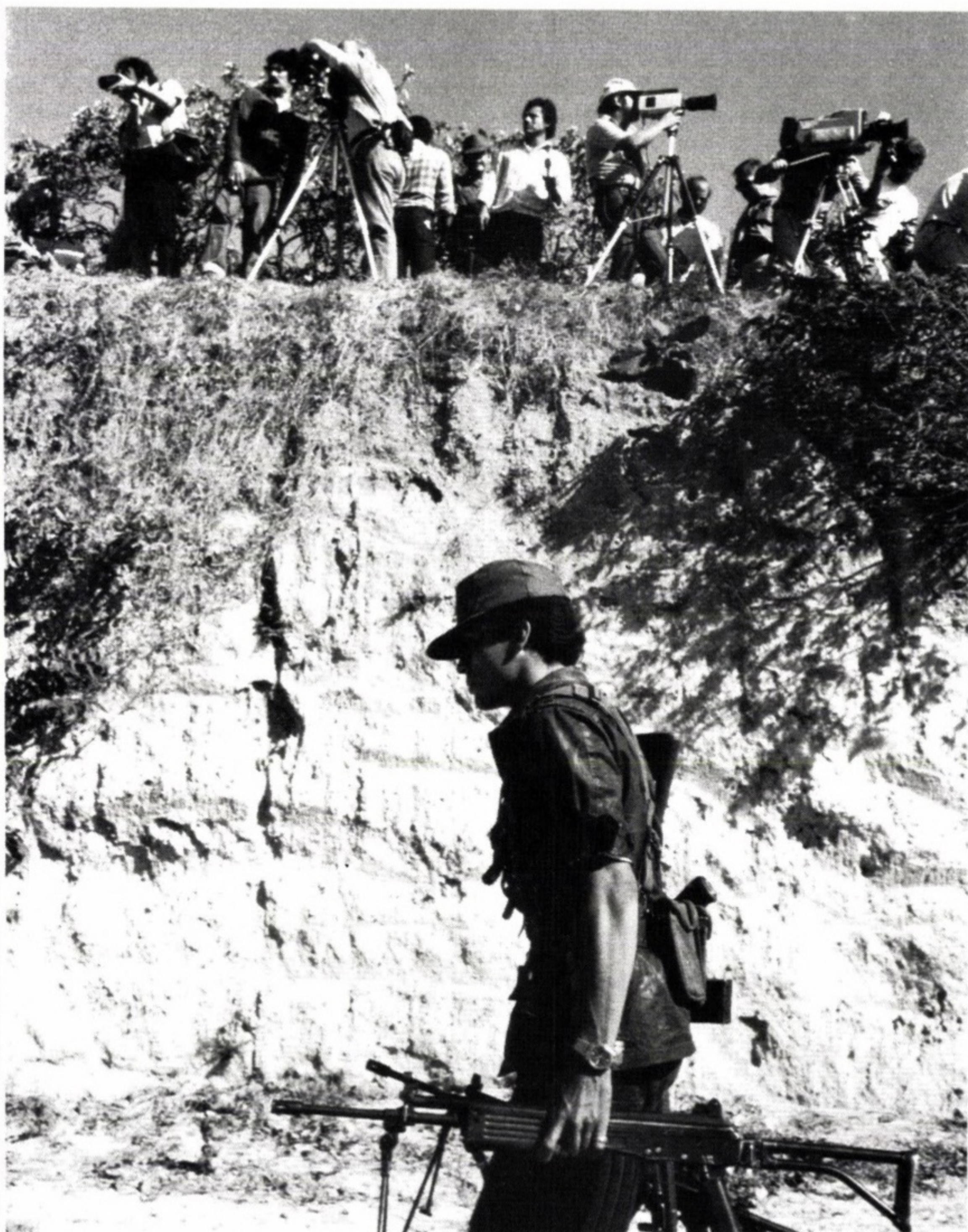
Latin America was always the land of the future.

Cold comfort. But it was something.

Now we are told that the future is the present.

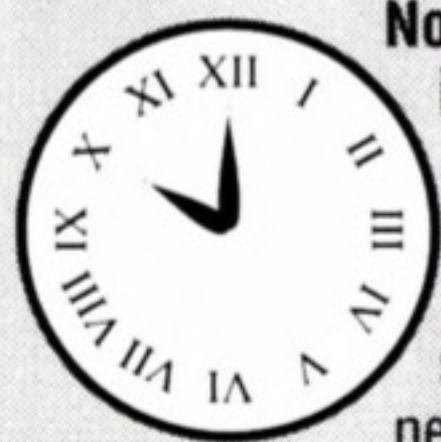


Eduardo Galeano, the Uruguayan writer and historian, lives in Montevideo. His most recent work is the widely-acclaimed trilogy *Memories of Fire*, an imaginative reconstruction of Latin American history, which is published in paperback by Methuen. This article was translated by Ana Ransom.



The Western media turns a blind eye to state terror and repression in Central America.

TRAINING



No teaching this morning. A compulsory, 'in-service' course on new technology for teachers. Fred's suspicious. What will new technology be able to do for history teachers? He has a soft spot for the glamour of new technology. What bothers him, though, is the science that lies behind it; he can't make head or tail of what he tries to read about it.



Electron orbits dandelion

Peter Stalker offers therapy to Fred – and anyone else who's tried and failed to understand *A Brief History of Time*.¹

SOME of you may have put this book down feeling slightly faint, wondering how you can be so stupid while the rest of the world is so clever. Professor Stephen Hawking's popular guide to cosmology has sold more than a million copies in hardback around the world¹. It is soon to appear in paperback and is to be a major film and TV series.

No need to repeat too many of the painful details here. The Cambridge professor's brain dances around such subatomic particles as leptons and anti-quarks and the possibility of infinitely curved space-time. A high-speed intellectual roller-coaster ride quite likely to toss you out of the car at the turn of the next page – or at best have you clinging on by the fingernails. Exhilarating stuff, but a lot of the excitement comes, I suspect, from the sense of sitting alongside someone who understands such ideas rather than really grasping them yourself.

Science has held out the promise of giving the answer to 'life, the universe and everything'² ever since ancient Greeks pondered on whether the earth was round or flat. Through Galileo and Newton in the seventeenth century and Einstein (and Hawking) in our own age, the details have become increasingly refined.

And technologists have applied scientific theories with some spectacular results: generating everything from nuclear power to moon rockets to holographs of the Eiffel Tower on Rice Krispies packets. So what does the baffled 'non-scientist' do if such awesome power seems beyond their grasp? Well, keep awake for the next few minutes and you might derive a little comfort from knowing what scientists can and (more important) cannot do.

The first thing to bear in mind is that science ultimately never explains anything at all. It only *describes* what happens around us – which is frankly a lot less

impressive. The description may be more precise than you or I might offer but it is a description for all that.

You will have realized, for example, that if you crunch your car into your neighbour's gatepost at 20 miles an hour you will do much more damage than if you nudge it at 10. An engineer will be more precise. She (or he) will point out that if you double the speed you quadruple the impact.

Now keep asking 'Why?'

Why? 1. Because the energy of a moving body is proportional to the square of the velocity.

Why? 2. Because it follows the equation: $E=mv^2/2$ where E is the energy of the car's motion, v the velocity and m its mass.

Why? 3. Because this follows from Newton's 'Second law of motion'.

Aha! So this is a 'law'. You may be tempted to stop asking questions in the face of such authority. But in fact you have received no explanation at all. The first answer repeats the original response in a more general way that would apply to other speeds too. The second reiterates this in a slightly different language using symbols instead of words. And the third tells you that it was Isaac Newton who wrote this equation down because it matched what happened every time he played billiards or threw apples around.

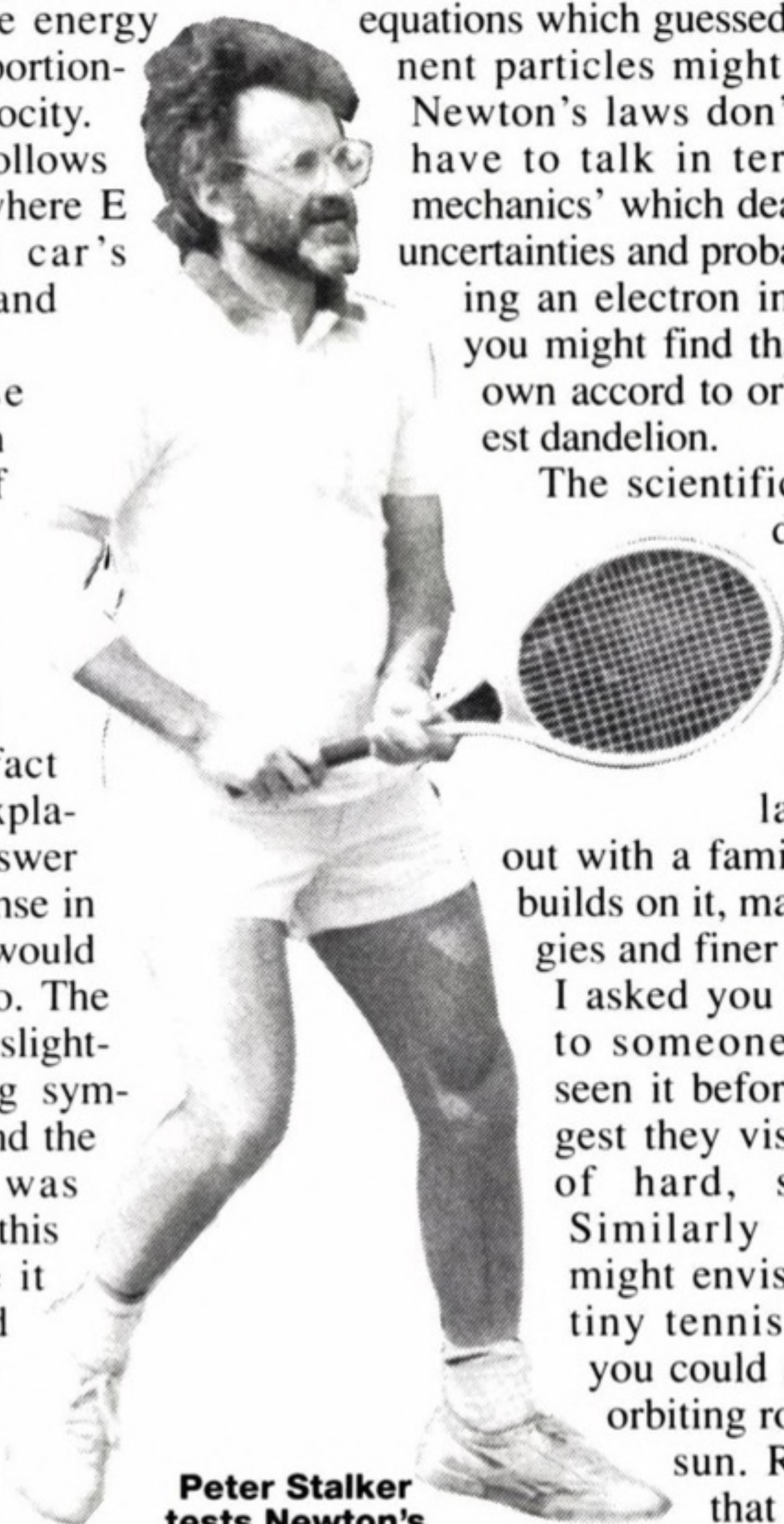
This and other scientific statements are so

convincing (and get away with being called 'laws') because they appear to determine what will happen in the future. But they don't. All they do is describe what has happened in the past and guess that the pattern will repeat itself. It is just possible things will be different next time. You might try driving a car at a brick wall at a 100 miles an hour on the off chance of coming to no harm at all, but please make sure you have renewed your NI subscription first.

Technologists apply such scientific predictions to the construction of cars, or bricks or walls and will tell you how they interact. But ask them *why* they interact in this way and they will eventually pass you on to a scientist who (no matter how many equations they might try to confuse you with) in the end can only say 'Well, that's the way things are'.

In fact Newton's 'laws' are not universally applicable. Change the scale of measurement and they become completely unreliable. You could change the scale at which you look at the NI, for example. To you it just looks like paper. But a chemist, wondering how the rather fetching picture of myself (below) might be affected by being doused in nitric acid, would find it easier to understand the ensuing mess if she (or he) understood it as a collection of molecules of cellulose. And a physicist looking even more closely would try to picture these molecules of tennis player as clouds of electrons whirling round nuclei. Looked at more closely still the dissolved athlete could only be described with a set of equations which guessed where his component particles might be. At this level Newton's laws don't work at all, we have to talk in terms of 'quantum mechanics' which deals with all sorts of uncertainties and probabilities. Try crashing an electron into a gatepost and you might find that it decides of its own accord to orbit round the nearest dandelion.

The scientific language which describes this strange world can seem very alien. But it works the same way as ordinary language. It starts out with a familiar idea and then builds on it, making neater analogies and finer distinctions. So, if I asked you to describe paper to someone who had never seen it before, you might suggest they visualise it as a sort of hard, smooth 'cloth'. Similarly molecules you might envision as clusters of tiny tennis balls. Electrons you could see as tiny planets orbiting round an even tinier sun. Remember though that paper is not cloth or tennis balls or



Peter Stalker tests Newton's laws.

planets. These are only descriptions. In the end paper is paper; which unfortunately is a bit of philosophical dead-end.

As one of the founders of quantum mechanics Niels Bohr put it: 'It is wrong to think that the task of physics is to find out how nature *is*. Physics concerns only what we can *say* about nature'.³

You probably feel quite happy talking about tennis balls or planets. But there are times when the analogies get stretched so far that the brain starts to lose contact with the original image. The latest sub-atomic theories, for example, say that we are all made up of infinitely thin pieces of string which may exist in ten dimensions. Now string you can imagine, even if 'infinitely thin' doesn't really bear thinking about. And three dimensional space is something we can all understand – or make it four if you add time. But where are the other six? Well, just as you know you can move your hand with four 'degrees of freedom' in four dimensions so objects, considered in certain ways, have ten degrees of freedom.

You won't intuitively understand such things. Most scientists don't either, they just become familiar with manipulating their own abstract language as a useful way of organizing information. Nobel Laureate Richard Feynman is reassuring on this point: 'I think I can safely say that no-one understands quantum mechanics. Do not keep saying to yourself "But how can it be like that?" because you will get ... into a blind alley from which no-one has yet escaped.'

All of this mind-bending ambiguity might be unnerving especially to the non-scientist. But really you should celebrate such uncertainty because it helps undermine myths of scientific omniscience. Newton's laws and many others which followed, spurred scientists into a vision of a universe that might eventually be described in its entirety. So if we knew where any collection of molecules (like you) were now, and how they were moving, we might even use scientific laws to predict where you would go on your holidays and save you leafing through all those glossy brochures. Such 'determinism' now seems antiquated.

The sub-atomic world becomes so strange and 'unscientific' that some physicists like Fritjof Capra⁴ have been moved to consider the weird world of quarks and leptons in semi-mystical terms that combine the new physics with a holistic view of life in general. Such an approach is dismissed as 'rubbish' by scientists like Hawking. And while considering quantum mechanics from a Buddhist perspective can be very illuminating⁵, there's certainly no need to do so – it's extraordinary enough on its own terms.

The idea of a scientifically 'determined' universe has been further undermined by one of the newest branches of mathematics: 'Chaos' theory. This might sound like an accurate description of your



Illustration : Jackie Morris

holiday planning and did indeed arise out of a closely related activity: weather forecasting. Chaos theory has used high-speed computers to show how nature could create fantastic and beautiful objects, like snowflakes or leaves, from relatively simple repeated operations. But it has also illustrated that our future world is not just difficult to predict in practice; it is also theoretically impossible.

This is because the smallest changes in one place can have dramatic 'knock-on' effects elsewhere. So your turning a page of the **NI** magazine in Toronto, say, could so disturb the air as eventually to cause a hurricane in Melbourne (or vice-versa). But you could never predict that this was going to happen. This is not just because of the inordinate number of calculations involved. The central problem is that you could never measure the original position of the page with sufficient accuracy. In chaos terminology this is called: 'sensitivity to original conditions'. You might say you could measure its position to ten decimal places, but you could always then measure it to eleven and predict a completely different result; all the difference between a whirlwind knocking down someone's house and a single molecule of oxygen disappearing up their nose.

It is ironic that while scientific exploration has been producing incredible and exciting pictures of the world around us the technology it has spawned has had some depressing results – from atomic bombs to chlorofluorocarbons. But such destructiveness arises not from the sophistication of our technology but its crudity. While we can tinker with the genetics of life or with atomic fission we cannot operate with the sensitivity of naturally occurring processes, which might give us cause to consider that technology in certain areas should simply not be pursued at all.

Exploration of nature – human, artistic or cosmological – will undoubtedly continue. And while there are scientific minds like those of Stephen Hawking many steps ahead of us we will always want to listen to their stories of exploration – even if we can only get glimpses of what they are trying to describe.¹

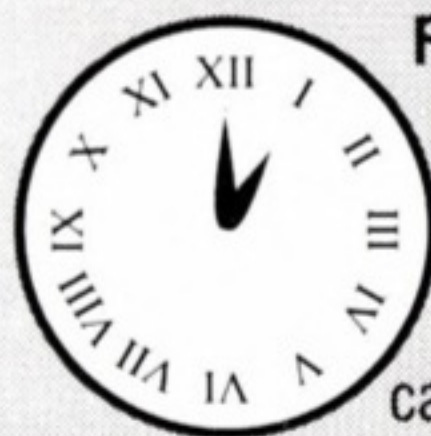
Stephen Hawking makes frequent references to what God might have been up to when designing the cosmos. Maybe She's laughing right now at even his attempts to disentangle it all.

Fred, I know you think you will never understand such things as long as you live. Well, maybe it *is* all a question of time. If you could wait just that little bit longer all might be revealed...

Peter Stalker is a former co-editor of the NI.

¹ *A Brief History of Time* by Stephen Hawking, Bantam Books, 1988. ² The answer to 'Life, the Universe and Everything' is '42' according to Douglas Adams in *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. ³ *Inventing Reality* by Bruce Gregory, Wiley Science Editions, 1990. ⁴ *The Turning Point*, by Fritjof Capra, Flamingo, 1983. ⁵ *The Dancing Wu Li Masters* by Gary Zukav. First published in 1979, now available as a Rider paperback, 1990. ⁶ *Cartoon History of Time* by Kate Charlesworth and John Gribbin, Cardinal, 1990.

LUNCHBREAK



Fred's never really known what to do with it. Suspended animation between classes. Trying to catch up - with work. He'd be at a loss without work. He tried it once. It's not just the money. You need a sense of purpose and belonging, too.



The philanthropist

Fred finds out how to do something beautiful. Sheila Rowbotham goes with him.

SPEED was imperative. There's a pace when you're almost running yet technically walking. Fred had perfected it during his time at the school.

He was heading for a particular corner seat in the staff common room. The eccentric shape of the room made a cranny, and here he could create the illusion of solitude. The window caught the sun. He could munch his tuna fish sandwich, lapse into reverie and cut out both the music of Soul II Soul wafting through the window and the endless, fragmented tales of classroom woes exchanged obsessively between the other staff.

He rounded the corner. His seat was empty. He sat down and closed his eyes. 'Sorry! I thought you were asleep!'

He was gazing at a pair of round glasses. His heart sank. It was Carol Andrews, the young revolutionary humanities teacher. She thought of him as an aging hippy. These sixties men were a joke. All that personal politics stuff had left them tied up in knots. The gloss of reconstructed masculinity, carefully polished through the 1970s, was now peeling off like old paint.

'Heavy morning?' she asked.

Irritation overtook guilt. He winced at the insinuation that he was past it. He found it difficult to respond with even formal politeness.

How could anyone ever manage to chat up Carol? She was so fierce! If only these young women would see how feminism could make them more womanly. There'd been a beautiful poster in the early 1970s showing a pregnant woman in a flowing dress and headed 'WOMAN POWER'. He really must try to explain to Carol about the mixed consciousness-raising group he'd been in. But it was so difficult to find the right moment.

'This is Subhadra,' Carol announced. Around the corner came another small

woman. Her smile in greeting made her seem genuinely delighted to meet him.

Fred felt more amiable. He started fussing about for seats. The routine structure of his day suddenly faded. He was alert, engaged.

'She is going to speak to my class about women in India. Want to bring in your lot?'

So he had been churlish to Carol after all. She had invaded his cranny to do him a favour. It was beginning to get crowded. He stood up to take less space. Towering above Carol and Subhadra he decided he was a clumsy, cumbersome giant. He tried to shrink into his scholar's stoop.

'Should we take a walk?' Subhadra said unexpectedly.

As they got away from the school he straightened up. There was another Fred, too – distinguished, in an informal kind of way.

Subhadra began speaking intensely, without preliminaries. She reminded Fred of his former self – in the days before small talk. He felt a touch of the animated earnestness that had carried him through so many meetings.

'I've been working on the unionization of women in Kampur for several years now,' she said. Fred could hardly conceal his surprise. He had never made any connection at all between Indian women and trade unions.

'We've managed to organize an association of about forty thousand home workers, small vendors and contract workers, by combining a trade union approach with co-operatives.'

Fred glimpsed Carol wrinkling her face. Would she tell Subhadra that this was all wrong? He was amused. Carol's Left Union had no place in its catechism for this kind of organization. But on the other hand, anti-racism definitely did have

a place. Carol faced a dilemma. This was going to be amusing. He prepared to defend Subhadra. But she carried on without him.

'We talked to women in groups about their problems. Some of the most enthusiastic were quite skilled workers. We thought we might have a chance. We suggested they form a co-op. It took a bit of explaining. They were puzzled about how workers could have their own business.'

Carol was scowling by now and muttered 'I'm not surprised'.

'A charitable woman who had been active in the Nationalist movement gave us rooms in an old house and collected money from her friends. We bought sewing machines. When the modern one arrived, the one that could do fancy stitching, all the women gathered round, talking at once. We bought better materials and began to do higher quality garments to a basic design of loose T-shirts and floppy trousers. We have contact now with Twin Trading. I suppose you've heard of them?'

Fred hadn't but didn't want to admit it.

'The women's confidence increased by leaps and bounds,' she continued. 'People in the area were really looking up to them.'

Carol had been gazing gloomily at the lake. She asked if their earnings had improved. Subhadra said they earned more or less the same. But they were working longer hours. She found the co-op and its meetings took up all her time.

'What about the rest of your political work?' Carol asked.

'Here we go!' thought Fred, bracing himself for rescue.

'Well, the co-op is my political work,' Subhadra replied firmly.

'But it's politicizing only a few women. How could you give it such priority?' demanded Carol.

'I think it depends what you mean by politics,' Fred observed confidently, feeling that here his experience was relevant.

Subhadra smiled graciously and turned to Carol. 'We've had precisely the same argument in Kampur and in Bombay, in Delhi and in Madras. When I was a member of the Revolutionary League's study circle I agreed with you. We were working as Marxists in the textile union. But there were few women involved. As the textile factories closed, what were we meant to do? Give up?'

For once Carol was at a loss. This was an unfamiliar situation for her. She would have to talk to one of the comrades, Ranjan. 'Bourgeois philanthropy!' she could hear his voice saying contemptuously. But Subhadra's question troubled her.

Fred, typically, was lapping it up. He'd be offering to sell the clothes to his friends next. They were all middle-class types.

'We set up a series of trade union and community centres,' continued Subhadra.

'We have those too!' Fred felt a flash of recognition.

'I know,' grinned Subhadra. 'Some of my best friends in Britain worked for them and were suddenly on the end of fax machines. Let's sit down, shall we?'

Fred was struggling to think of ways he could help. Perhaps Beth could sell the clothes, sort of feminist Tuppaware parties. But he suppressed this suggestion. Many of their rows had come from him volunteering Beth to do things.

Carol cast him a Cassandra-like look and asked Subhadra what problems they had encountered.

'It's been time, really. The men got resentful of the women working all hours in the co-op. One woman was really severely beaten.'

'Then one of the women, Geeta, had an idea. She met a woman from Bombay who told her they had a food co-op there to earn money. She suggested we try and cook in turns and bring the smaller children to play together in the workshop. There were two spare rooms there.'

'That sounds like even more work to me,' remarked Carol.

'But how else can women earn?' Subhadra was growing impatient.

'Couldn't you force the State to do anything?' Carol retorted.

Fred was now fully wound up for an argument. 'We can't get the State to do enough here. Couldn't the men do more?'

'Well, that's always difficult,' Subhadra replied. 'Even I wondered sometimes whether we were being utopian.'

Subhadra smiled disarmingly at Carol. Fred glimpsed the sophisticated politician effortlessly combine with the utopian.

'But amazingly the process of setting up the co-op really did involve some of the men, and even the older boys. They helped us to transport the food.'

She looked at her watch. 'Good Lord!' She was up in a flash. 'I said I'd go and see some designers about doing a catalogue of our clothes. I'd better go.'

'I'll show you the quickest way,' offered Carol.

'Don't worry. I'll be back by 2.30pm. We can discuss all the co-op's problems with the class! Perhaps they'll have some suggestions.'

Fred shook his head ruefully. 3B never had suggestions. Only grievances. He sat pondering the ducks. He wasn't used to all this political discussion. He'd got into a rut. There was no energy any more.

A sudden noise made him turn. It was Subhadra, reaching into her bag. 'I forgot. Would you have a quick look at this? I'd like to give a copy to the school library.'

He looked at the small yellow novel in his lap. It was by someone called Rohini. The blurb said it was set in Bombay. It was published by a feminist press called Sheba, and the title was *To Do Something Beautiful*.¹ He began to read ...

Time passed ... and passed.

'I'll go and get him,' Carol told a disgruntled Deputy Headteacher, alarmed that her staff were lapsing into truancy. 'I expect he dozed off.'

She found a very strange Fred indeed. There was a light in his eyes when he looked up from reading.

'It probably never occurred to you, Carol,' he said, 'that you ... we all could do something beautiful.'

She led him back to school kindly. She thought: 'He won't last much longer in teaching'. Fred's generation were going down like flies. If he was lucky he might start a wine bar when he left. She wished Fred could make a go of *something*.

She prepared some challenging questions for Subhadra. The only co-op 3B were ever likely to form, she thought to herself cynically, would be some kind of protection racket. □

Sheila Rowbotham's most recent book, *The Past is Before Us*, a record of feminism in action since the 1960s, is published by Penguin.



1. *To Do Something Beautiful* by Rohini, Sheba, 1990.

TEACHING



On a good day Fred loves it. But he needs to believe in what he teaches, and tries not to lie. So what is he to teach now about the post-war history of Europe? All change – and who knows where it will lead? Whatever happened to all those joyous people dancing on the Berlin Wall? Has the revolution of 1989 been lost already, or did it never really happen at all?



The Little Red Province

Curt Stauss records a tumultuous year in a small East German industrial town engulfed by pollution.

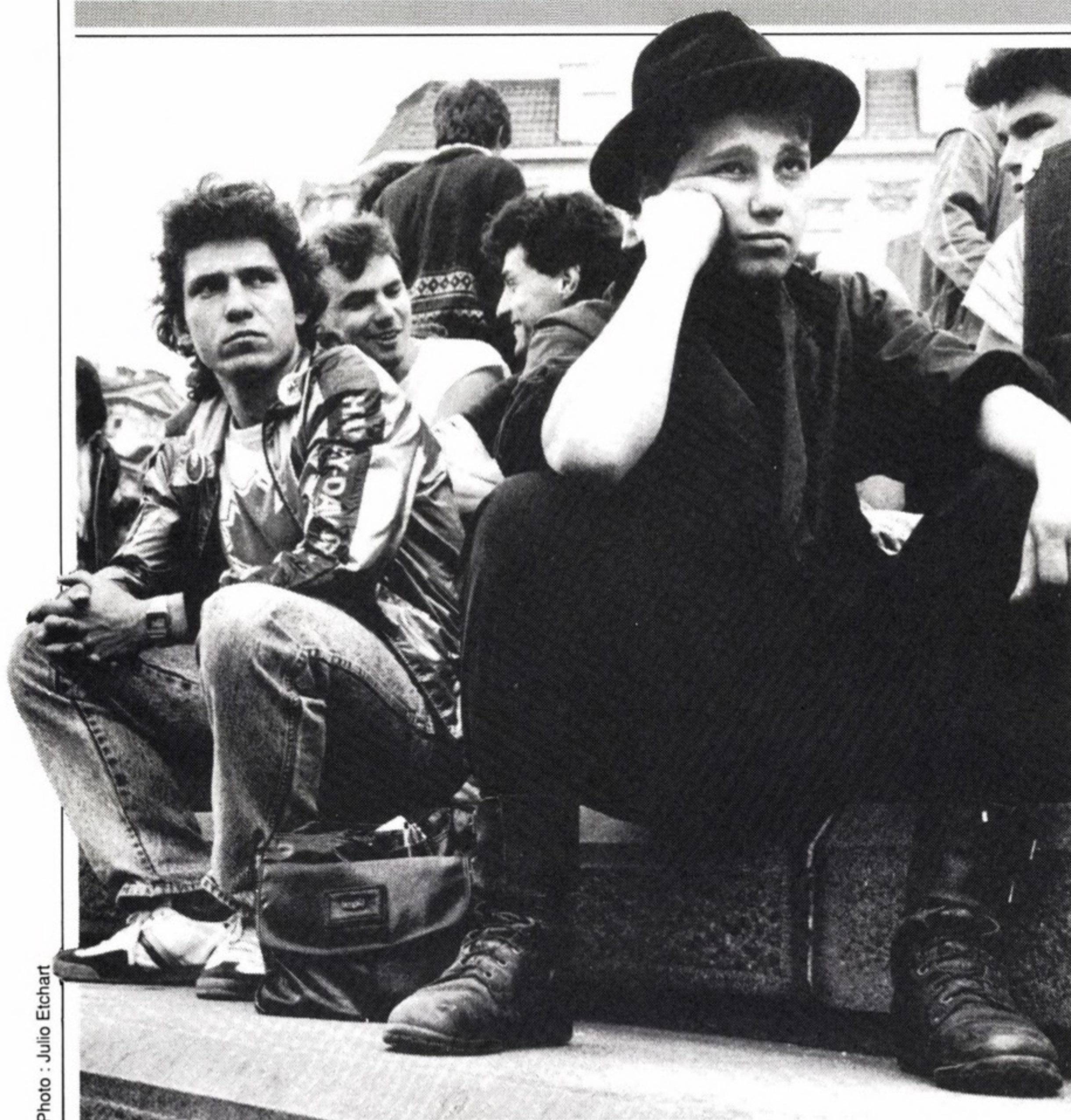


Photo: Julio Etchart

Which way now? Young East Germans look west for wealth or turn to hatred of foreigners.

IN the strangely dejected quiet of the morning of October 7 1989 a young man came to see me. It was the official state holiday to celebrate 40 years of the German Democratic Republic. But the big processions of previous years were nowhere to be seen in our town.

The young man wanted to know whether I was responsible for the posters

that appeared all over town the previous night. They were small handmade notes protesting against environmental pollution and complaining about how it endangered health – and they had thrown the security forces into a tizzy. Imagine: posters with no official permission! At last something was happening even here, deep in the provinces!

Sadly it wasn't I who had pasted them

up. The posters were signed: 'The Little Green Province' – a name which captivated my imagination. Was a new movement being formed at last? Was there a change of mood, an ideological change of heart amongst the local population?

The district around Lauchhammer, an industrial area 30 miles north of Dresden, is more commonly known as 'The Little Red Province'. People passing through recognize it from afar, by the clouds of coal dust darkening the air. The smell is distinctive, too: chemicals and rotten eggs, the hydrogen sulphides produced by processing coal.

More than 30,000 people live off coal around here. But this industrial monoculture, producing secure and well-paid jobs as well as clouds of coal dust, is now on the verge of collapse.

Around 250 years ago the meadows in the northern part of this area near the Black Elster river used to have a tinge of red due to ironstone in the soil. This gave the 'The Little Red Province' its name. Metal castings were exported all over the world and an industrial proletariat developed very early.

More recently 'The Little Red Province' might have seemed like a positive reference to the ideological orientation of the area. There's hardly anyone nowadays who still remembers the true origin of the name. And since last October 'The Little Red Province' has become a pejorative term, like 'Reds'.

The first new group to appear in Lauchhammer called itself Environmental Forum. It grew out of the first demonstrations, towards the end of October 1989, and was composed of women and men who were outraged at the filth and the toxins in the air, water and soil. They'd had a gutful of official lies.

The Environmental Forum found some support amongst professionals in the water industry and in medicine, people who had known about the problems for years but kept quiet about them.

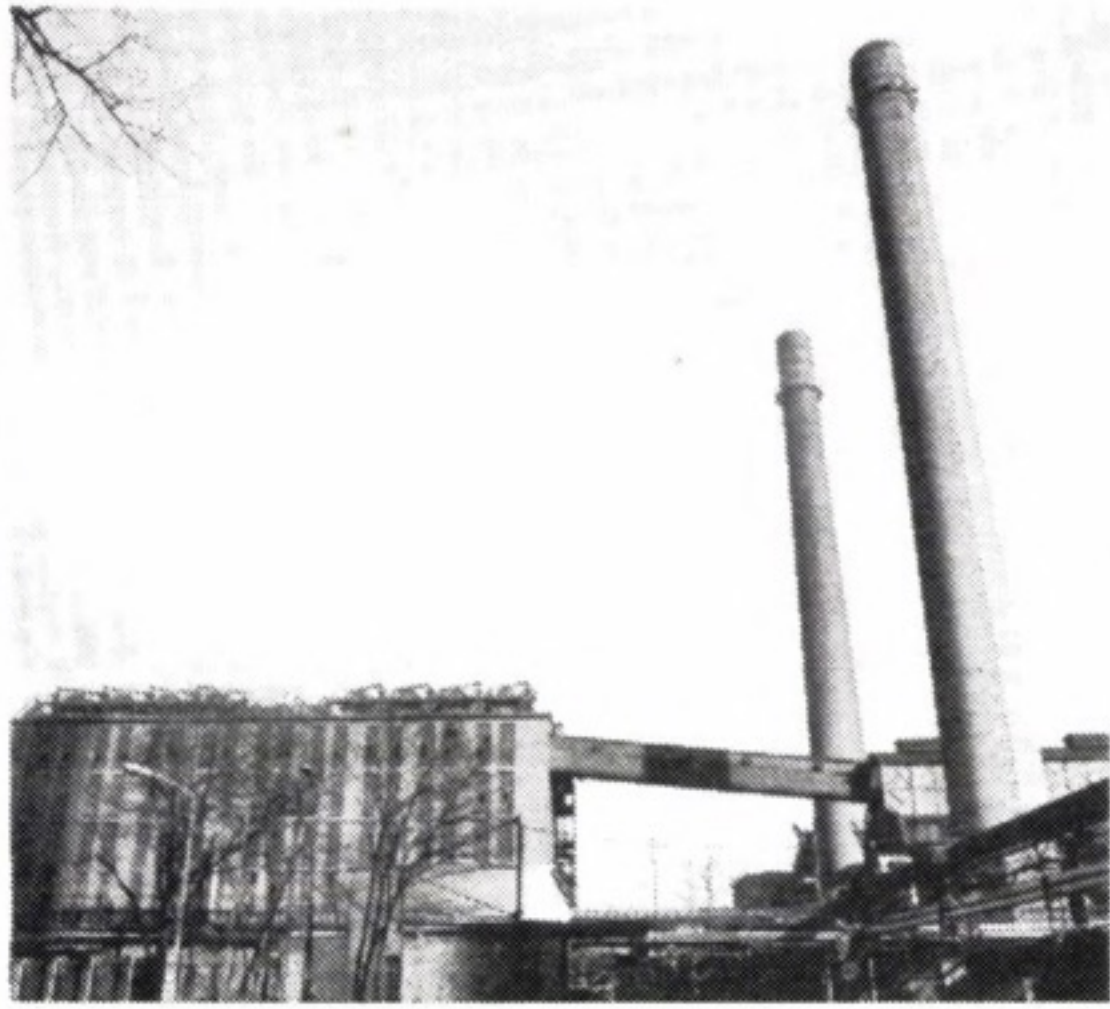
Smoke signals

Take the ferrous alloy plant. This is a factory, more than 100 years old, which produces silicone for steel production and computer chips. A thick, milky white cloud of smoke belches from this factory's chimneys day and night.

The smoke is totally harmless, claims the company director. So why have the people of Lauchhammer been complaining of headaches for years, whenever the wind carries a column of smoke over the town? It's psychological, says the director. Then why do the children in the school just 500 metres away from the plant get so aggressive every time the cloud envelops the school? Teachers find that the children become unteachable – those in the lower classes have to be fed sedatives to calm them down. But the director insists: the emissions are non-toxic!

The Environmental Forum tries to find

Photo: Curt Stauss

**Poison is still pumped out in Lauchhammer.**

out the results of tests on emissions from the plant. There aren't any, says the director. So how does he know the smoke is non-toxic? Some data is suddenly produced, but it is irrelevant.

Then, early in 1990, the Environmental Forum stumbles upon a secret analysis of the plant's emissions. At this point the director gives up his denials. The smoke contains levels of carcinogenic substances and heavy metals like cadmium, lead and berillium that are way in excess of permitted limits, some of which are much higher anyway than those in West Germany – lead 34 times, berillium 80 times and cadmium 166 times. The director then comes up with an interpretation which claims that the dust is so fine that when it enters the lungs it is exhaled again. The environmentalists don't know whether to laugh or cry.

Meanwhile a Round Table had been established in Lauchhammer. It is composed of women and men representing old and new political parties, movements and mass organizations. The intention is to take the town's fate in hand, until such time as democratic elections are held.

The Round Table sends for the director of the industrial combine responsible for the ferrous alloy factory. He comes, and after a heated discussion he commits himself to closing down the factory by 1992. Agreement is reached on monitoring emission levels precisely, calculating the factory's economic viability and evaluating how much people's health had been affected by the ferrous clouds.

Now the director – like most people in East Germany – is so busy adapting to the transition to a market economy and to the West German Deutsch Mark that none of his undertakings has been honoured. The factory still smokes and stinks into the town, day and night.

Political shifts

Meanwhile, the national New Forum political movement – founded in September 1989 – begins to sprout offshoots in the provinces, including Lauchhammer. Word gets around fast that you can join by going to see the local protestant minister, despite intimidation from the 'Stasi' state police.

But within a very short period of time

the ideological balance of power in the town shifts dramatically. A 46-year-old woman shop assistant, who was initially very active in the Forum and wanted to get involved in the politics of education, very quickly leaves the group again. The reason: New Forum is sceptical about too hasty a unification of the two German states, and about market economies. It attempts to define not only what needs changing in East Germany but also what is worth retaining.

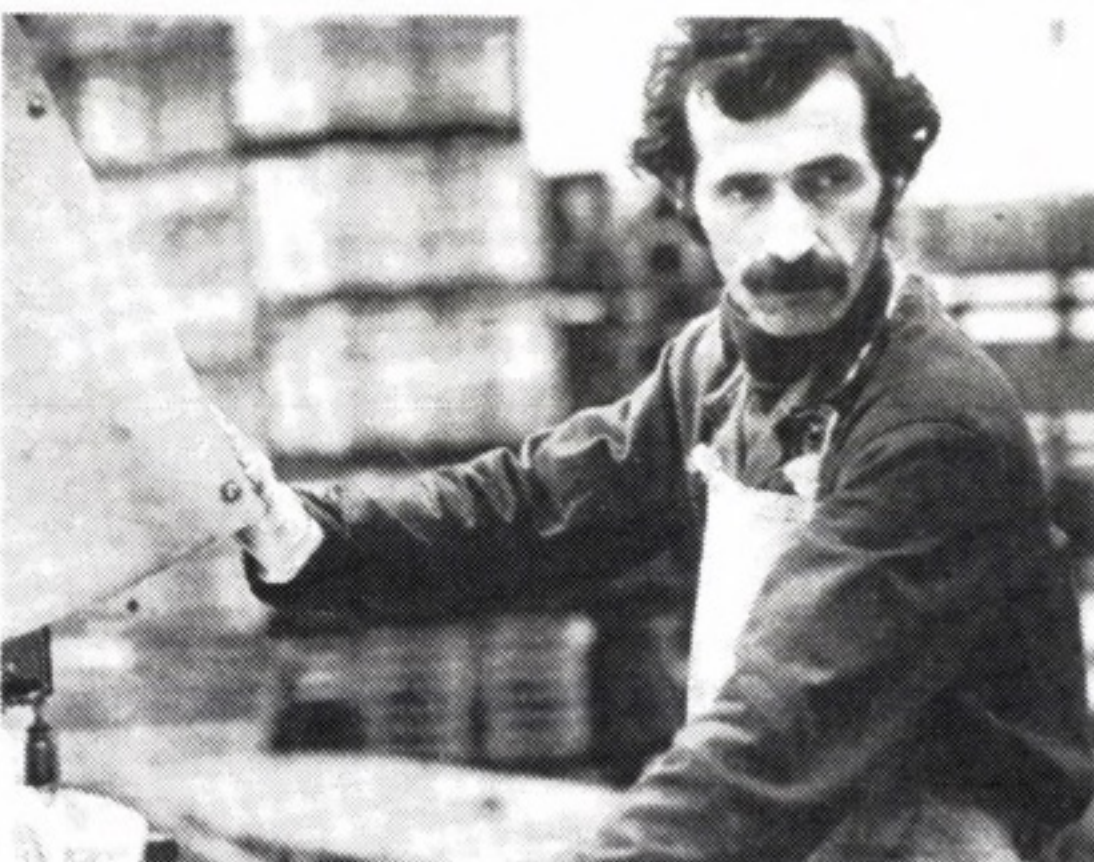
All of this is totally incomprehensible to the woman, who wants unification as soon as possible. She supports the Christian Democrats (CDU), who until recently have been of no consequence at all in Lauchhammer. In the March 1990 elections the Christian Democrats get 50 per cent of the vote, and the local elections produce very similar results. Where is the Left? What has become of the proletarian consciousness of this working-class town in 'The Little Red Province'?

New 'businesses' are being set up almost daily. But they produce virtually nothing and create precious few jobs. Taxi companies, video shops (which didn't exist before) and used car dealers – all of a sudden the town is full of Western scrap metal. The price of second-hand Western cars has almost doubled. It is being paid by people whose money, as of 1 July, has been halved in value.

Money is a subject in itself. The queue in front of the bank hasn't budged since the beginning of June, and it's a very long queue. Western currency, which had a mystical aura for many years, has suddenly become the ordinary, everyday legal tender. The entire price structure has changed completely – some prices are now higher even than in West Germany.

The West Germans, known as 'Westies', treat the 'Easties' as if we are were illiterate idiots. They forget that we paid the higher price for the partition of Germany as a precondition for peace in Europe. They have dumped their rubbish on the cheap in the East for years. Their own chemical industry is cost-effective because it buys products at knock-down prices from places like Lauchhammer, where the incidence of cancer keeps increasing.

And a new kind of anger is growing. The Wall symbolized the physical division of Germany, but the post-Wall scene is the setting for new and equivalent

**No longer welcome: 'guest workers' must go.**

social divisions. True enough, there used to be some hidden unemployment in East Germany. But the level of social welfare was so high that poverty was unthinkable.

Now, just a short time after the 'Currency, Economic and Social Union', almost 20 per cent of the workforce is unemployed or in a desperate situation as a result of the imposition of short-time working. The trend is on the increase.

What are unemployed people to do? For the moment they are still enjoying their newly-won freedom to travel – if they feel like it, that is. And they can travel down to the job centre – in vain. Some work in the West during weekdays to earn money there, providing a new pool of cheap labour for West Germany.

Many are developing a hatred of those foreigners who still have jobs in Lauchhammer. There aren't many of them, a few hundred from Vietnam and Mozambique. But that's enough, it seems, in this small town in the eastern part of Germany, unaccustomed as it is to dealing with foreigners. And wherever you turn in 'The Little Red Province', you find a growing number of people who sympathize with the radical right-wing Republican Party – especially among the young.

Change of heart?

Is this an ideological change of heart? Hardly. Amongst those who seem to be 'changing' the most rapidly are people who deserve to be called nothing short of unprincipled opportunists. They are the ex-Communist bosses and party officials who are managing to fix up jobs for each other while pushing others out of jobs they have held for years and onto the streets.

No. It's not an ideological change of heart. Left-wing attitudes were never more than skin-deep, at least in the majority of the population. This is because the revolution in East Germany after 1945 changed the structures of power and ownership – but did not go on to change the structure of social relationships.

When Erich Honecker gave his last big speech many people regretted the fact that there wasn't a hint of sadness about all the things that had gone wrong in the past 40 years, all the changes that should have happened and never did – nor, finally, any regrets about the many people who fled the country.

Now, the much-repeated phrase is: 'The past 40 years have all been for nought'. But this response is counter-productive. Of course it is not true for *anyone* that they lived the past 40 years in vain. And if the past is given an exclusively negative interpretation, if positive memories are forbidden, then it won't be possible to mourn either, to take leave from what has been lost. □

Curt Stauss is a prominent Protestant minister and critic of the East German regime. This article was translated by Barbara Einhorn.

Photo: Henning Christoph

WHAT NEXT? - THE FACTS

danger and opportunity

Tea. Fred begins to feel an appetite for something a bit more substantial. Facts! He wants facts! But there are no facts about the future. And no tea leaves to read either (teabags have seen to that). Just an old pack of Tarot cards.

Speculation. There's money and power to be made from that. But Fred just wants to know. Are there dangers that can be avoided? Are there opportunities that can be grasped?

The NI takes a sceptical look at what we can reasonably predict.

WEAPONS

*** DANGER ***
The world spends more than \$1,000 billion per year on arms - more than the total income of one half of the world's population. Military spending since 1960 has doubled in the North and grown six-fold in the South. Just one nuclear submarine belonging to one of the 'superpowers' can destroy all the major cities in the other.

☆☆☆ OPPORTUNITY ☆☆☆
At a conservative estimate arms budgets can be cut by at least \$250 billion over the next few years.¹ In the US, for example, spending \$1 billion on guided missiles creates about 9,000 jobs; the same amount spent on local transport would create 21,500 jobs and on educational services 63,000 jobs.² But a fundamental shift in economic power and militaristic attitudes will be needed for the 'peace dividend' to be realized.

ENVIRONMENT

*** DANGER ***
The annual production of waste per head will have doubled during the twentieth century, while the proportion of this waste that is biodegradable will have fallen from more than 90% to under 50%.³ The number of cars will grow from 400 million today to 700 million by 2010. In many cities traffic speeds are now slower, because of congestion, than they were in the age of the horse.

☆☆☆ OPPORTUNITY ☆☆☆
By 1992 there will be more than 16 million miles of fibre-optic communication cable, each of which can carry 100 times more information than a copper wire. The need for commuting in and between cities could be drastically reduced. In terms of carrying transport one person, the bicycle is roughly twice as efficient as the car, the bus seven times and surface rapid rail twelve times. The Department of Energy estimates that renewable energy resources in the US exceed annual use by 250 times.⁴

PEOPLE

*** DANGER ***
If we carry on abusing the earth's resources we shall be unable to sustain future populations. There are now about 5.3 billion people in the world. By the year 2020 there will be about 8.1 billion and by 2100 perhaps 11.3 billion or more than twice present levels.

☆☆☆ OPPORTUNITY ☆☆☆
Women who are poor and uneducated have more children than women who are educated, because more of their children die in infancy. Improve the status of women and access to family planning and the population growth rate will fall. In Cuba the population reached 75 years, the same life expectancy as in South Africa population growth rate rose from 2.4% to 3.1% during the same period and life expectancy stayed at 63, similar to China or India.⁵

LIFE

*** DANGER ***
The project to 'map' the human 'genome' will reveal the genetic secrets of the DNA that helps to mould our physical and mental characteristics - the secret of life. By 2050 we may be able to buy a compact disc holding our complete genome.⁶ Everyone could then be screened for genetic disorders, for which there may be no cures, and the information - for a price - passed onto prospective employers or insurers.⁷

☆☆☆ OPPORTUNITY ☆☆☆
More than 4,300 genetic disorders have been identified as depending on a single faulty gene. It may soon be possible for these disorders to be controlled or even eliminated. In agriculture, biotechnology could have a major impact on crop yields - the yield from cassava in Africa could be quadrupled if the plant could be made resistant to African cassava mosaic virus.⁸

POVERTY

*** DANGER ***
In Africa, the number of people living below the poverty line (\$370 per capita per year) is set to increase from 180 million today to 265 million in 2000. In Eastern Europe the number of poor people as a percentage of the total population will actually grow.⁹

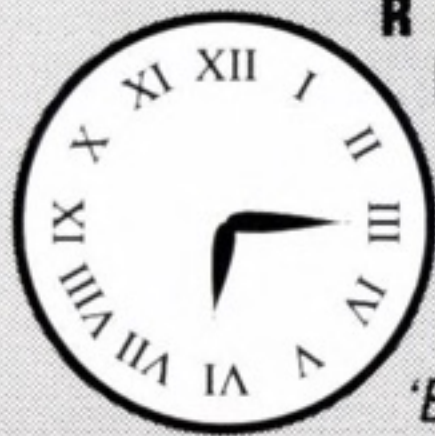
☆☆☆ OPPORTUNITY ☆☆☆
In South Asia the total number of people living in poverty is expected to fall from over 500 million today to some 360 million by 2000, and in East Asia from 290 million to 60 million. There is even expected to be a slight fall in Latin America to less than 50 million. These estimates are, however, based on optimistic and fairly conventional predictions for economic growth.¹⁰

The truth about Tarot

There is a mistaken belief in the Anglo-Saxon world that Tarot cards originate in the occult and fortune telling. The Tarot pack was invented in northern Italy in the fifteenth century and is widely used across the world today in ordinary card games. It was not associated with the occult until the eighteenth century at the earliest. Belief in the mystical powers of the pack spread across Europe from France with the nineteenth-century revival of interest in magic. See Michael Dummett, *Twelve Tarot Games*, Duckworth 1980.

1 The State of the World's Population 1990, UNFPA and World Population Prospects 1988. UN. 2 The Global Possible, ed Robert Repetto, World Resources Institute, 1985. 3 World Development Report 1990: Poverty, World Bank 1990. 4 UNESCO Sources, No 17, July/August 1990. 5 Populi, June 1990, UNFPA. 6 Rethinking the Role of the Automobile, Worldwatch paper 84 1988. 7 J Naisbitt and P Aburden, Megatrends 2000, Sidgwick and Jackson, 1990. 8 State of the World 1990, Worldwatch Institute 1990. 9 WWF News no 66, July/August 1990. 10 Real Security, Geoff Tansey, World Development Movement Occasional Paper 2, 1990. 11 Making sense of the genome's secrets, Susan Watts, in New Scientist, 4 August 1990. 12 Your genome in their hands, Christopher Joyce, in New Scientist, 11 August 1990. 13 WHO Press Release WHO/36, 20 July 1990. 14 Miracle or Menace?, Robert Walgate, Panos Institute, 1990.

HOME



Recreation. Entertainment. Family. Fun. So where the hell is everyone? A note on the kitchen table. 'Back late. Alice gone to gig. Henry with chum Bertie next door. Look in freezer. Love Beth.' Fred opens a can of beer, switches on the TV, groans as he slumps over the sofa and looks at the paint peeling off the ceiling.



Bargain! Free time sale!

In the West, leisure is becoming more important than work. Geoff Mulgan and Ken Worpole consider the implications for Alice and Henry.

FREE time is what people are left with once there is food in their stomachs, a roof over their heads, security for their families and all the bills have been paid. Alice and Henry will have plenty of it. Fred and Beth haven't done so badly either. But what is it for?

Until recently this has never been a problem for Fred and Beth. 'Politics' of one kind or another occupied almost all their time between work and bed. But by the time their financial worries were over their political options seemed to be over too; starting new relationships looked easier than the tortuous process of

political realignment.

Free time now means catching up with the things they've missed out on in the past: novels by Michael Moorcock and Toni Morrison, the new Australian cinema, opera cassettes borrowed from the public library, gardening and fishing, weekend trips to the landscapes of their respective childhoods.

They are painting in the gaps of a 'fuller' life which was defined originally by nineteenth century European humanist culture: work, self-education, rest and occasional play. But for Alice and Henry this will no longer be an option. For them free time is likely to be more important than work itself.

Yet for most of human history people have defined themselves by work. *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread* says the Old Testament; *salvation through hard work* go the Protestant ethic and the rigidities of the New Right; *labour power*, how nature is tamed and society transformed, argues Marxism. Often people's very names declare past occupations; Smiths, Bakers, Shumachers, Taylors, Millers, Shepherds and Thatchers. Occupation always defined class and class defined social consciousness and status. The world of meaning and self-definition seemed rooted in work: hard, physical, diurnal work; fetching and carrying, growing and feeding, making and breaking, communicating and transforming, ordering and being ordered. Housework, homework, work in fields, farms and factories. Now, in the affluent West, that world has possibly gone for ever.

Alice and Henry might live to be a hundred. Neither of them will start work before the age of 25 and they will probably retire by 50. They will pay other people to help bring up their children.



Their aging parents will be looked after in private homes. Many pastoral and voluntary caring relationships are now bought and sold in the market place. There will be lots of free time.

It has been computed that until the 1970s in Western Europe the typical working life was 47 hours a week, 47 weeks a year for 47 years, totalling 103,823 hours in a lifetime. Today this is more likely to be 37 hours a week, 37 weeks a year for 37 years, totalling 50,653 hours – less than half.

Conjuring trick

Much of this apparent reduction of paid labour has not in fact disappeared but simply been transferred to the unpaid domestic sphere. For the hours spent in the self-service supermarket (where massive cuts in labour costs have been achieved) are now really work too, as is filling up your car with petrol, DIY activities like building new cupboards and painting the ceiling at home, laying concrete paths, mending the car, driving to work. All these are jobs that in the past other people were paid to do but are now somehow part of 'free time'.

It is a spectacularly successful conjuring trick that capitalism in the West has pulled off: with one hand cutting down on paid labour by encouraging people to regard the jobs that used to be done by other workers as new forms of



Photos: Stuart Franklin/Magnum

leisure, whilst with the other hand establishing new (and more profitable) economic sectors around voluntary pastoral care, such as care for the elderly.

Yet Alice and Henry may feel that all the great stories have been told – all the utopian political experiments have come to nothing, even though most of them have been based on fables, myths, irrational dreams and lies.

Take religion, for example. Fred and Beth have had to rebel against it (one brought up a Methodist, the other a Catholic). They suffered years of guilt and dissimulation before they could announce their own agnosticism or adamant disbelief. It is still a sore point with both grandparents that neither Alice nor Henry have been baptized. Yet organized religion is already as remote from Alice's or Henry's life as paganism or human sacrifice. They have been to church once, for Nan Smith's funeral, and all they remember is the smell of dusty curtains and a dead mouse under the pews. No golden cities and distant mountains echoing with thunder there. Heaven and Hell not only hold no terrors or promises for them – they no longer even exist as figures of speech.

Che, Rudi and Kylie

And when the walls came tumbling down in Eastern Europe at the end of 1989 to reveal cowering and bitter populations, overflowing prisons and mental hospitals, ruthless armies of secret police and state informers, corrupt politicians and equality only in misery, they might have wondered how their parents could have given even a second thought to the self-evidently corrupt, ruthless and authoritarian appeal of the ideal of 'World Communism'. Where their parents once had posters of Che Guevara, Bob Dylan, Rudi



Dutschke and Rosa Luxemburg on their walls, Alice and Henry have Kylie Minogue, Madonna and Nelson Mandela at Wembley.

There is a spirit of internationalism abroad again, it is true, but it has a solid bass line, a repetitive drum loop. It is in the shops all round the world within two weeks of being recorded in Detroit and remixed in L.A. For the single greatest cultural movement of the twentieth century is the rise and global hegemony of black music.

Even as the century nears its end, this key fact has yet to be properly understood or acknowledged. The musical forms that emerged out of the American black experience – gospel, blues, jazz initially; soul, funk, rock'n'roll, R&B, reggae, rap, House eventually – went on to become the dominant repertoire of popular music throughout the world, no matter how watered down. When in the late 1980s that powerful musical expression was joined by African, Latin American and hundreds of varieties of indigenous folk music traditions around the world to form 'World Music', the process of globalization of popular culture seemed complete.

Other global forces are becoming evident too, not necessarily derived from popular experience. The growth of world markets, to which the logic of capitalist development had to lead, has produced international brands of clothes, fast food chains, cigarettes, drinks, cars and advertising campaigns, culminating in what could be described as a 'Club Class' global, affluent lifestyle.

Saatchi and Saatchi, the world's largest advertising agency, claim that the French business executive driving a BMW car, flying TWA, wearing Italian clothes and banking with Citibank has more in common with an American counterpart leading the same lifestyle than with a Parisian neighbour who drives a moped and works on the Metro as a cleaner.

Global Eden

All of this leads Fred and Beth to worry that the fatal combination of an explosion of 'free time' with a booming global market in consumer goods and leisure industries will spell the death of their great utopian dream that they have cherished for so long – individual self-realization, mutuality in work and levelling out of global economic inequalities. The historical process of transforming the world, making it a better place, recovering a global Eden in its pristine simplicity, will end up with people selling it to each other by the dollar, pound or yen.

Alice and Henry will probably see it differently. Alice can already see the link between the internationalism of popular music and political concerns – Live Aid, Band Aid, the Nelson Mandela Concert – superseding that of the earlier brand of



internationalism based on revolutionary social class or a proselytizing religion. New and intermediate technology seem to be on Fred's children's side. All they lack now is the levers of power. Consumer power (the power of free time, choices of spending) rather than producer power (the power of work and the threat of its withdrawal) is their main weapon now. But will it be enough?

Buying Nicaraguan coffee, ecological soap powder and non-animal-tested make-up from the local Health Food store doesn't seem likely to bring the world to heel or alter the balance of world economic power. Consumerism has all too evident limits. Retailing and tourism can't salvage an ailing economy. You still need food, energy, shelter and transport, however advanced your society. The ownership and control of these things explains a lot about the way the world still works today.

The crisis in the Gulf in the autumn of 1990 reveals once more how heavily the Western lifestyle rests on its ability to buy cheap commodities, backing up the rights of the sovereign consumer with gunboats (or F-111s) where necessary. Freedom and self-determination for a small country only seem to count when they go along with the freedom to drive large cars and the freedom to consume.

The crisis shows something else – the vulnerability of our economies and lifestyles, and the free time they sustain. Maybe the age of leisure will turn out to be a brief and unsustainable interlude rather than a new dawn after all. □

Geoff Mulgan and Ken Worpole run *Illuminations*, a radical research and consultancy partnership working on cultural issues.

Simply...

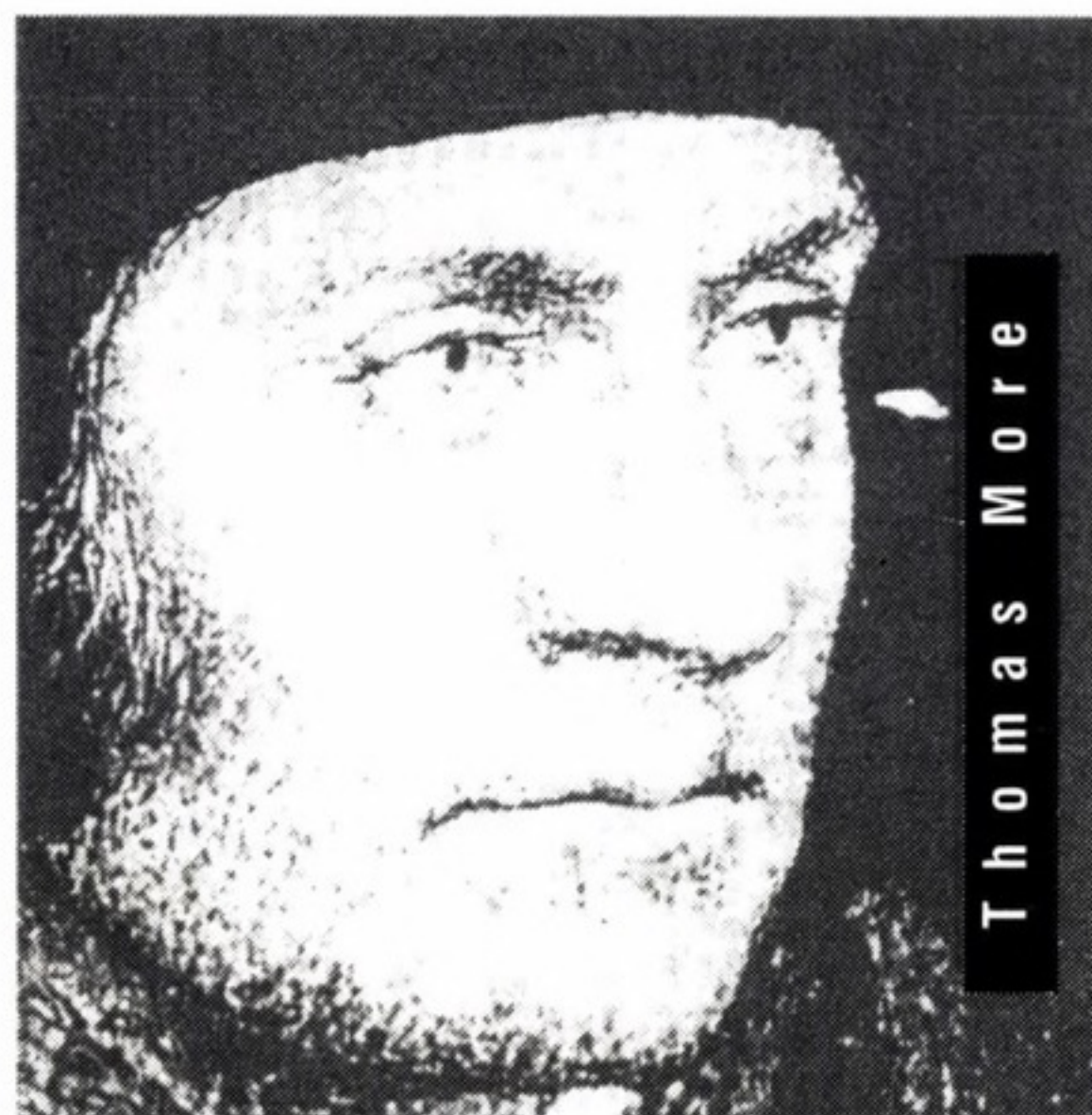
UTOPIA

1

Thomas More

UTOPIA

1 5 1 6



Thomas More

the road to nowhere

Fred makes a cocoa for himself and flicks idly through some of the books he bought in his idealist youth.

The word 'Utopia' derives from ancient Greek and means 'no place' or 'nowhere'. It is here, in Western culture, that dreams and schemes of the perfect society live.

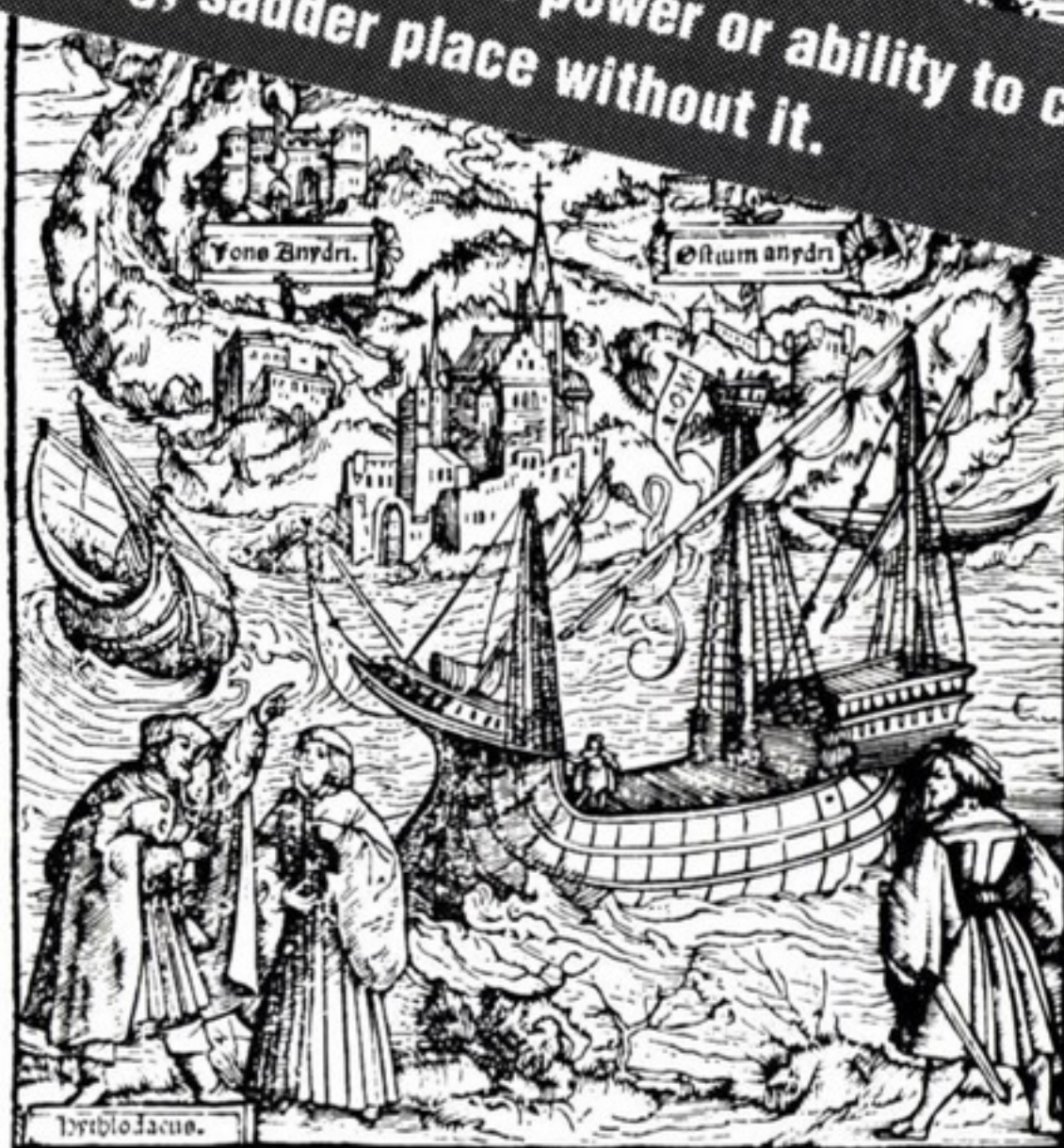
At first Utopia hid in imaginary places or islands in a still-unknown world beyond the great oceans.

But slowly places lost their mystery. The idea of progress took hold. The brutality of industrial life appalled many people. Utopia projected itself into the future instead.

Scientific discovery and the disillusionment of the twentieth century made the future look less interesting than the nature of time itself. So, intellectually unfashionable but undaunted, the idea of Utopia abandoned the world altogether and was launched into space.

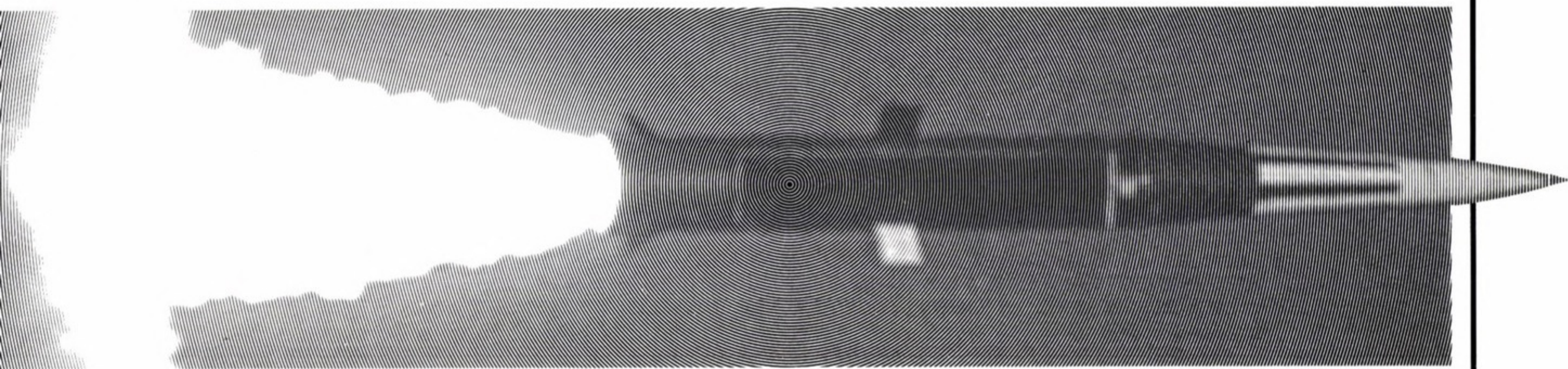
Here it still lives in the 'fantasy' titles on book shop shelves or in the movies, the subject of a growing body of feminist writing.

It has lost none of its imaginative power or ability to communicate ideas. The world would be a less interesting, sadder place without it.



This book introduced the term to the English language. The island of Utopia contains 54 semi-independent cities, but society is still largely governed by rural, agricultural life. Its people move regularly between the countryside and the cities. Everyone has a right to everything. Vegetarian monks striving for holiness gladly take on most of the nasty work. Only criminals may slaughter animals so that the population at large is not brutalized. Intended as a critique of contemporary English society, *Utopia* has since been claimed as the work of 'the first socialist'. Thomas More went on to become Lord Chancellor of England and was executed for opposing the marriage of King Henry VIII to Anne Boleyn.

William Morris



3

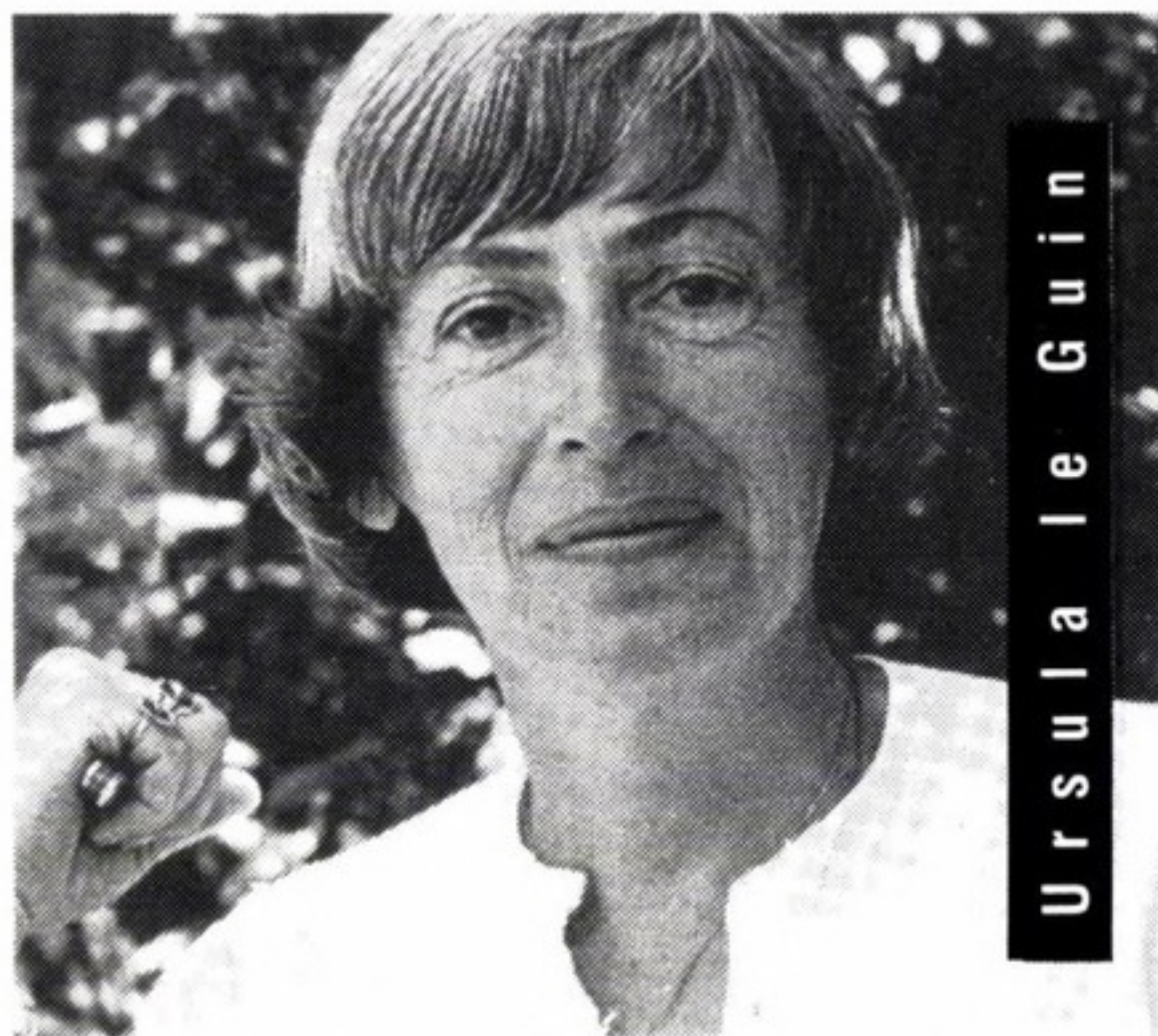


Ursula le Guin

The Dispossessed

1 9 7 4

Earth has been abandoned as a polluted desert. Shevek, the protagonist, lives on Anarres, a bleak moon of the much wealthier Urras. The demands of survival have enforced a form of anarchism on Anarres. Shevek is a brilliant physicist working on a Theory of Simultaneity. It will break through the limitations of time and space. He travels to Urras to pursue his researches, only to find that the 'propertarians' wish to exploit his theory to their own advantage. He joins a general strike by those who have been dispossessed on Urras and tells them: '(on Anarres) we have nothing but our freedom. We



Ursula le Guin

have nothing to give you but your own freedom'. Later he tells a friend: 'My ideas in my head aren't the only ones important to me. My society is also an idea. I was made by it. An idea of freedom, of change, of human solidarity, an important idea'.

2

William Morris

News from Nowhere

1 8 8 9



In 1888 Edward Bellamy, an American socialist, published a book called *Looking Backward*. It portrayed Boston society in the year 2000, with the oppression and inequality of industrial capitalism long gone and with a military-industrial army working in huge monopolies rallying to the banner of nationalism. It foresaw electric light, credit cards, shopping malls and electronic broadcasting. It was hugely successful. The English socialist William Morris was so appalled that he published *News from Nowhere* as a riposte to Bellamy. It is set in England in the twenty-first century. A revolution has taken place following a demonstration in Trafalgar Square in 1952. There is no government and no private property. People work because they want to. Lyrical in tone, the book ends with a boat trip along the River Thames. Bellamy was the more prescient; but he is almost forgotten, while the work of William Morris is still widely read today.

B E D



Sex. What sex? There isn't any for Fred. Not at the moment, anyway. He's going through a lean patch, a bit of a drought. Beth doesn't want to know. Fred is afraid to know why she doesn't want to know. He gets a pain in his heart if he thinks about sex, and a pain somewhere else if he doesn't. And she's out again.



Decent demons

Anuradha Vittachi eavesdrops on a private conversation, finds envy disguised as contempt, and a fair bit besides.

I hate going to bed alone.

You're not alone, you've got me.

I don't mean you – you're just a voice in my head. Monica was telling me during the coffee break yesterday that she has her mother's voice in her head, nagging and criticising her from morning till night, poor girl.

Most people don't have such interesting, friendly voices as me.

What about when you run the same old tune round my head all day?

Oh, that's my fault is it? Typical – you're always blaming someone else.

Funny, that's just what Beth said to me at breakfast.

You spend an awful lot of time whingeing and blaming others, rather than getting on with it.

Getting on with what?

Oh for pity's sake ... You know.

Oh, that. I can't do that.

Why not?

'For better, for worse, keeping us only unto ourselves', or whatever the line is. I made a vow, remember?

So the next time you see Monica, and you pass her the sugar, and what you really want to do is to ...

Stop it!

I was only going to say, to ask her out for a drink after work.

I'm a married man. I can't ...

Not allowed, eh? And she's only half your age, which is not allowed either. Though plenty of your colleagues do it.

Like Jeff.

Exactly. That's why you were so sour on Thursday, wasn't it? Because Jeff took her to the pub. And he's married. And he's two years older than you. Not fair, is it? That's why you feel such contempt for

Jeff. It's really envy, disguised as contempt, because he's breaking the rule you want to break.

No! Well, yes, in a way. Up to a point. Well, no, actually. I don't really want to be with Monica. It's just difficult at the moment. I'm so bloody fed up with Beth refusing to ...

Blaming Beth now?

All I mean is, it's not surprising if I'm feeling frustrated, if ...

Well, why shouldn't you have an affair, if Beth is?

Don't, don't, don't. Beth's not having an affair. She's not.

But you think she is.

She's not. I can't bear it.

Just because you can't bear the thought it doesn't mean she's not doing it. Sorry.

Oh, God!

It happens.

But why to me? I did everything to be a good husband. I've kept my job, I've been faithful, I've done my share of the damned laundry ...

You've been such a good boy, so you should be rewarded with an A-plus, like at school, when you did all your homework like the teacher said. Come on, you know real life doesn't work according to school rules.

What's so wrong about being a good husband?

Maybe Beth wants someone who can admit to a little genuine wickedness.

Oh, I can't win, then. If I'm good, I'm no good, and if I'm bad, it'll be my fault she's ditched me ...

Whingeing again. So you think she's ditched you?

She's just back late ... She's just back bloody late, and for the fifth time in two weeks. Oh lord. What is she playing at?

So what about Monica then?

Monica has nothing to do with Beth being late home. It's not a question of retaliation.

Of course not. You're far too high-minded, aren't you, my friend? Revenge isn't included in those nice little rules you believe in – forgiveness is more the line, isn't it?

What's wrong with forgiveness? You could do with feeling a bit more of it yourself.

Nothing's wrong with it. If it's real.

It is real.

Not when what you really feel is revenge and hurt and bitterness, but you can't admit honestly to being the sort of person who has these blacker feelings, so you wallpaper over them with 'forgiveness', and 'compassion', and ...

And under the pretty floral wallpaper the phoney forgiveness starts rotting and stinking.

Couldn't have put it better myself.

For someone who's supposed to be a friendly voice, you're doing a pretty good job of being crushing.

Sorry; but a little honesty does seem to be called for around here.

Now I'm dishonest as well. Tell me the worst.

Okay. Let me spell out your sexual 'shoulds'. Rule one, women shouldn't be approached as sex objects. Therefore (rule two) you think you are not 'allowed' to have deliciously sexy thoughts about them, much less act on these thoughts – unless (rule three) these thoughts cluster around the one woman you're having a relationship with: having a relationship makes the erotic thoughts okay. How am I doing so far?



Not bad. Except I do sometimes think of other women and ...

And pay penance by feeling guilty afterwards. You're always so depressed after you masturbate. No-one could ever tell that thinking erotic thoughts could be fun. Anyway, rule four goes like this: since you have no justification for chatting up other women, you have to wait for your woman to break the rules first. Then you become what is known as The Injured Party. Then you have permission to do the same as your erring partner without incurring the blame that she incurred. An eye for an eye, a screw for a screw.

Are you suggesting I've not stopped Beth looking around because then I can make a guilt-free pass at Monica?

If the cap fits, dear boy ... I must say Monica is a good deal more luscious than Beth: when she bent down to mop up ...

Enough! Look, you're crazy. It is quite simple. I love my wife. I don't want to be unfaithful but if she is being distant with me I am bound to have ideas about other women. It's nearly midnight! Where is she?

Why don't you ask her straight out why she keeps being so late? Why do you keep avoiding the issue and pretending to be asleep when she comes in?

I wonder if I have the right.

The right? Where do rights come in?

The right to expect fidelity. Although, of course, I suppose it's reasonable for me to worry, these days with AIDS and ...

Oh I see, here comes another rationalization. You're giving yourself permission to ask her at last, not because you're feeling frantic, but because of AIDS! I wish you would say what you really mean.

Well, she's a free woman, not a slave. I

don't own her.

It's a question of human rights?

Yes – don't laugh!

And you don't want to be an oppressor?

I suppose so. Stop laughing.

Don't you believe in people keeping promises?

Yes, but ... things change. People change. I don't want to be inflexible.

Very reasonable. Very rational. Your feelings are screaming for reassurance that she loves you, you can't sleep for jealousy, you're racked with doubt about whether you're sexually desirable any more (that's what all this 'I'm too bloody old' stuff is about, isn't it?) and despite all this torture you're pretending to be very reasonable and using AIDS to justify asking Beth what's going on.

No, listen, I'm serious. Whatever my personal feelings, I have to recognize that I don't own her – or her sexuality. Isn't the revival of coupledness just a response to AIDS? Or do you think she owes it to me to be faithful?

Yuk. 'Owes it'?

I suppose if I don't own her, she can't owe me anything. I don't own anyone, or anything.

You seem very depressed.

I feel dreadfully sad.

Well, that's what you own, then.

What, feeling sad?

Yes. Your sadness.

Oh, great! Fantastic! I own my sadness. What am I supposed to do with that?

Own it. Properly. Stop pretending you're not sad, that you only worry about Beth's infidelity rationally because of AIDS; or that you 'shouldn't' be sad because you're so liberated. Own up to what you really are, a person who is very, very sad about his wife maybe loving someone else, not him. Someone who would like his wife to love him and desire him madly – and maybe have Monica and every other young woman desire him madly too. These aren't the sexual rules you like: these are your real rules, hiding the acceptable ones.

Put like that, it seems very simple – and horribly pathetic.

Not pathetic. Human. Vulnerable. Painful. Ordinary. Egoistic, rather than saintly. Join the human race, Fred! Stop being above it all.

Please come home, Beth. Please come home and say you were delayed because the car had a puncture, or because ... because anything. I can't stand this. It's past midnight. Please come home. Or phone. I'm not asleep. You won't wake me.

What will you do if she does?

Enough talk, okay? I feel terrible. Waiting and wondering is a species of torture. It reminds you that you are really alone, when you are jealous. You

can't say to friends that you sometimes feel like ... I think that if I find a man who lays a finger on her – well, I'll kill him. I'll take a knife and stab him. Plunge the knife in ... Are you shocked?

No.

I am. I never thought I could think such things. But you can't, can you, kill someone, wipe them off the face of the earth, just because they are causing you pain? I mean, here I am, proclaiming peace and non-violence, and I want to kill someone just because he might fancy my wife ... What a hypocrite I am.

On the contrary, you're showing a bit of honest feeling at last.

Of course I don't really want to kill anyone. I don't really want to get a knife or a gun. I think, if there were another man in Beth's life, he would be a real person; he may have children who love him; he might have fallen sincerely in love with my wife, without having intended to – it does happen ... and she may love him. How can these be grounds for punishment or death?

No grounds at all.

Sex and violence. I want to break the bounds in both – though I can't admit out loud, frankly, 'I want to kill him' or 'I want to screw her'. I want to do both – and I don't want to ... Oh, I want to be good; innocent; that's what I really want. I don't want to discover all these demons in me.

Fred, only babies are innocent.

I always wanted a simple life. To be a good husband, a good father, a good citizen of the world ... I have tried to be all these, and yet when something like this happens, everything is thrown up in the air.

It's no wonder you have always kept sex under wraps, Fred, instead of daring to let rip and enjoy it. Love and sex: they connect us so powerfully when they are intertwined into a bond that joins our heart and soul and body to that of another. And when the bond is tugged away, it seems to pull down our whole world with it. But it's also the doorway, Fred, this pain; your chance to show Beth what you're really like; to show her the depth of your longings. She wouldn't look for it elsewhere if she knew you felt so ...

I heard a car! There's the garage door. It must be her. I must switch the light off before she knows I've been awake and worrying.

Fred! Where are you going? Under the covers again. Where has it all gone, the fury and the jealousy, the desire to kill and the passion for connection? All your darkness hidden again in the darkness of the room, now the bedside light is out. Anything for a quiet life – What demon possesses you that you behave so well? □

Anuradha Vittachi is a former NI co-editor.



RIGHT, that's it! I've had enough. It's my turn now.

I told you I get depressed if I have to think too much. Nowadays 'pinkos' like me are supposed to be depressed all the time anyway, and today has hardly been a bundle of fun so far, you have to admit. Maximize the realism, minimize the idealism – that's the spirit of the age. You'd have to be half cracked to be an optimist.

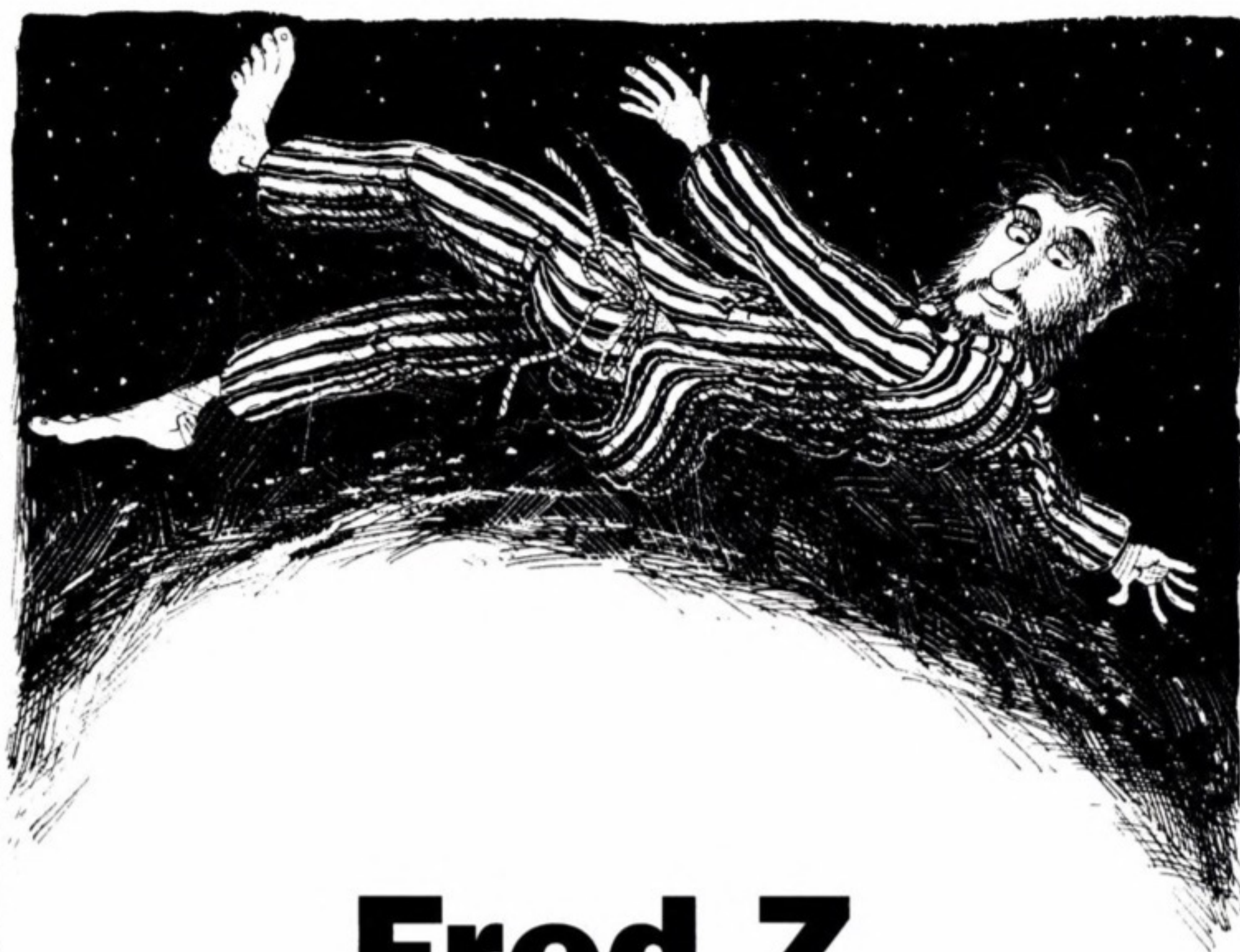
But I am – an optimist, I mean. And what about the next age? What happens when the realist purgative has taken effect? What will I or my children be left with then? That's what I want to know. And I'm not the only one, either.

After all, no-one can live without hope. The question for me is not whether there's hope, but what it is that I hope for. And there's another thing, something that's there just to give me the answer, whether I want it or not – my dreams. We're all dreamers, you know, every last one of us.

The trouble is, you can't dream to order. And now, of course, I can't get to sleep. I've woken up at last! At least everyone's back. The household is complete. Beth's here. She must have had a good time, whatever it was she was doing. I'm getting pleasantly, 'passively' drunk just from lying here beside her and inhaling the air.

The Greeks worshipped booze, you know. They created the god Dionysus in its honour; they dreamed up the ideas that founded Western culture at drinking parties called 'symposia'. That might explain a lot. And Beth looks pretty blissful, I have to admit. But I'd rather not go into that any further for the time being, if you don't mind.

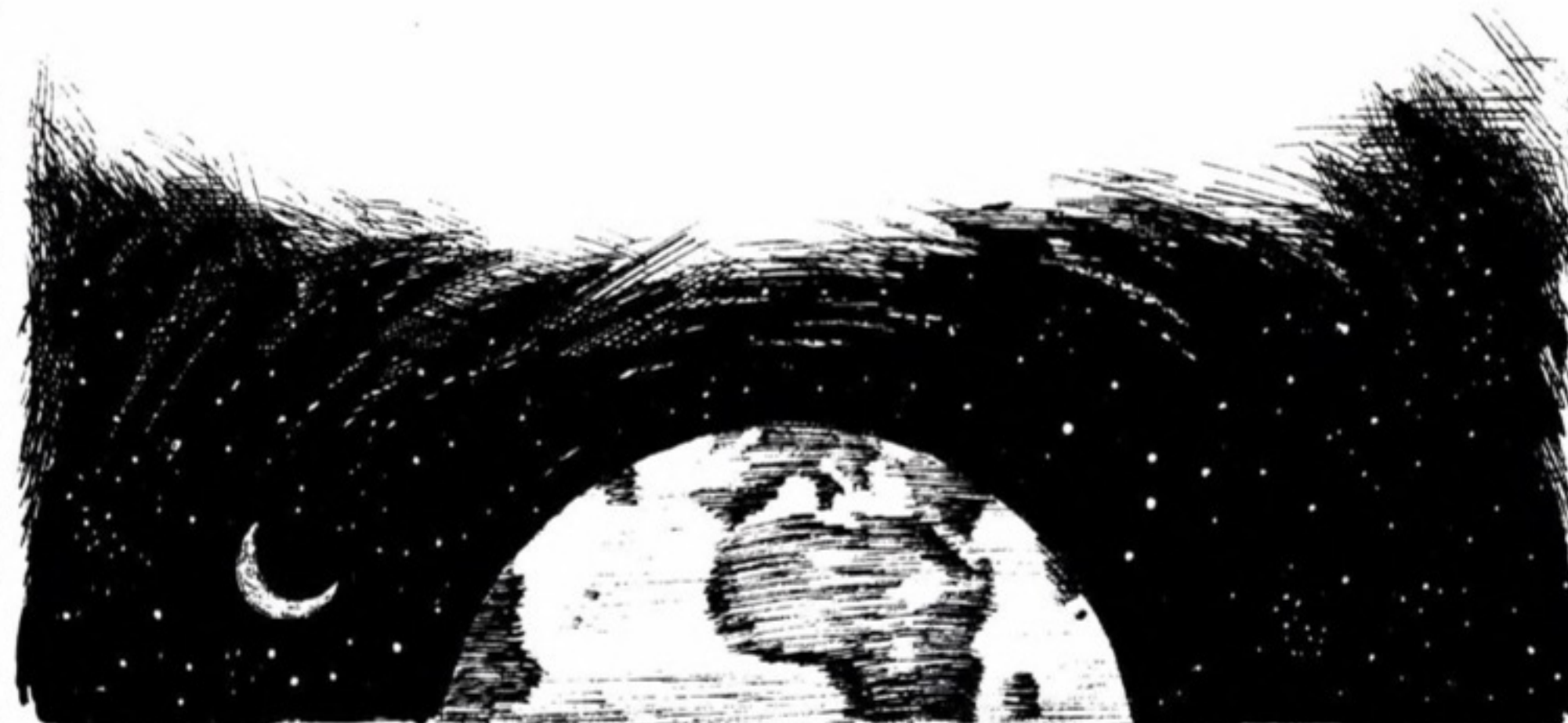
Sometimes, when I can't get to sleep, what I do is this. I recall a balmy night by the Mediterranean Sea, years ago. Soft sand, still warm from the day's sun, sinks beneath my feet. I go for a swim in the black, phosphorescent water, trespassing over the sinister darkness. I turn on my back and float, waiting for the tips of my toes to rise above the surface of the water, my arms outstretched.



Fred Z, This Is Your Dream!

We promised Fred the final word.

Here it is.



I open my eyes and stare straight up into a brilliant night sky, illuminated by the stars.

For an instant I imagine that I hang from the underside of Earth, peering down into the universe. Then, taking a deep breath, I launch myself off. I drift towards the point where time begins. I look back and I catch sight of Earth. It is breathtaking. I have the feeling of a dream of flying – I can keep flying so long as I believe it's possible. On such occasions I feel I can sense everything as it actually is.

I feel a sort of huge, human longing. The longing for freedom. Freedom from the fleeting, addictive rapture of needless consumption; from the monotonous, gnawing anguish of material need; from abuse, cruelty and the physical force of

others. Freedom to imagine, to be curious, to discover, to be good. Without this longing there would be no satisfaction to be had, no reason to dispute the pain and suffering of life, no joy, nothing.

For me, a new vision has to start here – with an 'ideology' of experience and anticipation, running through friendships and love affairs, children and parents, neighbourhoods and networks, exchanged and expressed in daily life.

'Bananas.'

I begin to wobble and veer towards Earth.

'Bananas.'

I hit the ground, but feel no pain.

'Bananas!'

It's Beth, calling out in her sleep.

'Bananas, darling? You want bananas?'

'Lovely bananas.'

I'm about to offer to go and fetch her a banana when she starts to snore.

No, you really can't dream to order. Dreams can be dangerous things too. One person's dream is another's nightmare. Trying to put them into practice has its pitfalls. After the revolution the Chinese decided that red should mean 'go' and green should mean 'stop' at traffic lights. Road junctions littered with mangled bicycles at last convinced them there were limits even to the revolutionary dream.

But make no mistake. We all do dream and I

reckon we're all influenced by what our dreams tell us. Anyone who tries to convince me otherwise is lying. Especially if they claim to be realists or pragmatists. Dreaming was what Mrs Thatcher (or one of her speech writers) had been doing when she said: 'There's no such thing as society'.

It's no good. If I start *trying* to get to sleep I'm done for. Pick up a magazine. No, *not* the **NI**! An article by Edward Thompson:

'At certain moments, history turns on a hinge of new ideas. I think there was such an 'Ideological Moment' in 1982 to 1985, in which peace and human rights movements together broke the cold war field-of-force and gave history a new hinge ... When the time is ready ideas can flow like the rivers of China in flood.'

Amen to that.

Looking to the future it is easy to forget the past, the debts we owe. I should not have to be reminded that it was not western liberal democracy, but 20 million Russian dead, that defeated fascism. I should be able to sense more easily how to make the most of the moment when the impossibility of nuclear war finally sinks in and brings an end to the Cold War. It really is a new age we enter; new questions to be answered, new ways to think, new opportunities to be grasped, new dangers to be faced. Child of the Cold War that I am, for the first time in my life I feel that time is on my side.

I won't be sold the pass of 'endism'. I won't believe that a 'new world order' is slipping smoothly into place and has nothing to do with me. As I watch the voracious machines of war snouting around the Arabian desert I realize that they are all the creation of a single, corrupt, deeply deranged and anachronistic Cold War industry with nowhere else to go.

And I'm still awake. Usually all I have to do is place a few lines of text in front of my nose and I'm out like a light. My 'Book at Bedtime', the one I'm supposed to be reading, may never be finished. The sight of the cover drives Beth crazy. It's by André Gorz:

'History might end in nuclear winter, or a global Chernobyl or Bhopal; it might unfold by continually reinforcing the domination of individuals by increasingly powerful means of dominating Nature; or by developing increasingly barbaric forms of violence against the growing mass of those who have been excluded, both within the industrialized world and outside it. If we avoid all this, it will not be because history *has* a different meaning but because we will have succeeded in investing it with one.'² Amen to that too.

Liberal democracy may be preferable to dictatorship but as the embodiment of perfection at the end of history it is a pitiful thing, a hollow vessel drained of meaning. It tries to convince us that more and more of the 'new world order' is simply beyond our control. It sets aside 'no go' areas where we can expect no say – from wars that are fought but not declared to 'state security', trade deals and the affairs of monster corporations. Huge parts of my life, especially the time I spend at work (or out of it) are completely untouched by 'democracy'.

As for the world, it's almost feudal the way the rich lay claim to the ownership of everything, a sham of 'democracy' when four out of five of its people are left destitute and without redress.

Mundane thoughts are sometimes worth having. Perhaps 'pinkos' like me tend to use the United Nations as a rather tacky dummy to suck when all else fails. Herman Kahn, the US futurologist, thinks

there are three options for world government: democracy, in which case the world would be ruled by the Chinese and Indians; national states, when it would be ruled by Latin America and Africa; or the power of the buck, with things staying much as they are.³ It doesn't take much thought to guess which of these options he commends to the American people.

The handle on the bedroom door turns slowly. It's Henry. Rubbing his eyes, trying to sob, grumbling incoherently to himself, he stumps across the room and clambers into the bed beside me. His



minute body fits into mine. He has a soft smell of urine and sweat.

'Daddy,' he says, after a while, 'what are bottoms for?'

'For sitting on, Henry.'

'Why are they called bottoms?'

'Because ... they're at the bottom. I suppose.'

'The bottom of what?'

'Us.'

'But they're in the middle.'

'OK, Henry. You win.'

'No, really Daddy, I want to know.'

'Shhh. We'll wake Mummy.'

But he's not satisfied, fidgeting beside me.

'Come with me,' I whisper. I prize him out of bed and head off conspiratorially for the kitchen. 'Fancy something to eat?'

'What?' says Henry, swaying on his chair at the kitchen table, baffled.

There's nothing in the ice box except one frozen hamburger, a large carton of cheap ice cream and a chunk of cheese. I put the cheese and the ice cream on the table.

'We must say 'thank you' to the cows for this, Henry.'

'Thank you cows,' he says.

The sound of the bathroom door closing. Beth. 'What's going on? Where is everyone?' I hear her croak. Unsteady footsteps on the stairs. 'What on earth are you doing? Oh God, I feel awful!' She slumps onto a chair beside Henry.

'It's a midnight feast,' he says. 'Ice

cream and cheese.'

Beth pales visibly and seems about to head back for the bathroom. 'I wouldn't mind a banana, though.'

'Who do we thank for those?' says Henry.

'Palm trees. And the people of Central America,' I say.

'Palm trees,' says Henry.

Beth brings a bunch to the table.

'Why didn't anyone tell me?' It's Alice, world music still playing in her ears. 'You woke me up.'

'A midnight feast,' says Henry. He's beginning to enjoy himself.

'I fancy a hamburger,' I say forcefully.

'Who do we have to thank ...?' begins Henry.

'Sorry,' I say quickly. 'I just have to have some meat. But don't worry, it wasn't the same cow we thanked for the milk.'

'How do you know, Dad? Typical,' says Alice.

'Have a glass of red wine, Alice,' I say.

'Really?' she says.

'Sure. You can thank the Greeks for that.'

'What?'

'Never mind.'

I cook the hamburger. The others start eating.

'This is crazy,' says Beth, but she is almost smiling. 'I have to be up at seven tomorrow. What time is it?'

'Half past two,' I say. 'So do I.' I bring back the hamburger and sit down at the table. 'Or perhaps not.'

'What do you mean?'

'Well, we could be naughty, you know. Do a bunk. Play truant.'

'Teachers can't play truant,' says Henry.

'You'd be surprised,' I say. 'Well, why not? Who's game?'

'Me,' says Henry.

'I have to ...' says Beth.

'But ...' says Alice.

'The seaside. How about the seaside?' I say.

'It's November,' says Beth.

'Raining,' says Alice.

There's a pause.

'Well, why not?' says Beth.

'Ok, let's!' says Alice.

'Yeah!' says Henry, clapping his hands.

'Right, everyone off to bed,' I say. They shuffle away, leaving Beth and me alone. God, what have I done? Will the car make it?

Beth is peeling another banana. She looks much better. She raises one eyebrow. It seems like years since I've seen her do that. I must be dreaming.

'Well, Mr Fred Z! What next?' □

¹ EP Thompson, 'When the war is over', in *New Statesman and Society*, 26 January 1990. ² André Gorz, *Critique of Economic Reason*, Verso, 1989. ³ Herman Kahn, *The Next 200 Years*, Hudson Institute/Associated Business Programs, 1977.

AID

Smokestack

Indians question the mega-projects

AID helps the donor and the recipient. So runs the conventional wisdom. The recipient gets what they need and the donor gets the jobs to provide it.

Whether India – traditionally the biggest recipient of British aid – gets what it needs depends upon which way you experience it. Take as an example one of the largest projects, the Rihand power station in eastern India.

The supply of electricity is fundamental to economic growth. Shortages can put a brake on development. But things look different to Haraq, a tribal farmer who lost three acres of land to the smokestack. 'The authorities will not give me a penny for my land,' he said. He has no land deeds. As many as 116 other people are in the same position. Even some who do have deeds are still waiting for compensation. Outside the site offices local people queue for jobs that were promised to each family. The promises have remained just promises.

Many Indians criticize the highly centralized energy programme as inappropriate. Rihand belongs to a cluster of 15 power



No compensation for tribal farmers and their families displaced from their land by Rihand power station.

stations which, when the lights are switched on, will have the highest concentration of power generation in the world. Environmentalists are concerned that every day Rihand alone will deposit 10,000 tonnes of toxic ash into the environment. Seepage into the reservoir is already killing fish on which local livelihoods depend.

British companies are the main beneficiaries of the aid programme. In fact, Northern Engineering Industries, who are building Rihand, have received

more aid than any other company – £47 million (\$89 million) in subsidies. A total of 2,600 British companies have profited.

India's own highly capable power industry is suffering from slim order books when all around foreign companies, backed by aid, are erecting smokestacks. 'The British have not bought a nail from India,' said a former Indian civil servant. 'Even stone chips – simple pebbles – for the water-treatment plant have been imported.' For years to come India will be buy-

ing spare parts from abroad.

Environmentalist Darryl D'Monte is calling for big technology to be supplemented by smaller schemes. Of course the country needs electricity. But conservation measures could actually meet the shortfall in supply expected by planners. Money could then be ploughed into smaller projects which create jobs, meet the needs of local people and conserve the environment.

Steve Percy

Photo : Steve Percy / Mike Hall

FINANCE

Honest

New Nigerian bank deals with the poor

THE shining white paint of the one-storey building seems out of place in Ajegunle, a slum suburb on the outskirts of Lagos. 'People's Bank of Nigeria' proclaims the entrance

to the first 'poor people's bank' in the country.

'I need 500 naira (\$60) to buy equipment to complete a job I'm doing,' says carpenter Mustapha Sanusi, jostling for a place in the queue for application forms. A commercial bank had turned down his application for a loan because he could not provide collateral and besides, the money he needed was 'too small'.

Providing loans without inter-

est, the People's Bank is a grassroots financial institution owned by the Government and targeted at the poorest Nigerians who live below the poverty line. They have borne the greater part of the burden of the economic Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) started by the Babangida military government in 1986. The results have been currency devaluation (by 80 per cent) and inflation, with the minimum wage remaining at its pre-SAP level of 125 naira (\$16) a month.

Against this backdrop, the People's Bank is seen as a god-send for poor Nigerians. Tai Solarin, an outspoken critic of the Government who has been appointed the Bank's Chairperson, is happy that 'the Government has realized that structures operating in the country have not served the purpose of the ordinary people'.

Some critics question its sustainability and others view it as a sop to pacify the poor. A major criticism of the scheme is that the maximum lending figure of \$255 is too low to help many

small-scale businesses. Still, the sums being disbursed have clearly helped many and the Government hopes to extend the lending ceiling in coming years.

There have been few repayment defaults. 'Poor people are more honest than the rich,' asserts Bola Ajibola, Attorney General and Minister of Justice.

To obtain a loan, applicants must belong to a professional or trade group of 15 people. The group passes on to the Bank names of members eligible for a loan. It acts as an informal guarantor, as its other members will not receive any loans until the beneficiary pays back on schedule.

So far, the People's Bank has lent two million dollars to 9,000 artisans, small-scale farmers and businesspeople. President Babangida has approved an extra \$25 million for its activities. The Bank plans to establish 170 new branches in 1990 alone. Its success has attracted the attention of the African Development Bank, which plans to inject funds into it.

Kingsley Moghalu/Newslink Africa



More honest than the rich; few defaults on loans to the poor.

Photo : Fay & Francesco Carracciolo

HEALTH

New hope

New river blindness drug for West Africa

RIVER blindness – known medically as onchocerciasis – is one of the most important causes of blindness in rural areas of West Africa. It is transmitted by a blackfly which breeds in rivers and passes on minute parasitic worms from other infected humans. These organisms can live for many years inside the body causing intense itching and other symptoms, including eventual blindness. Because of the disease whole communities have had to leave fertile riverside villages and resettle in more arid areas.

The most effective way of combatting river blindness until fairly recently was by spraying the breeding grounds with insecticide, a process which will continue for several years yet. But recently the news has been much better. Tests of the drug ivermectin in Liberia have shown that not only does it stop the progress of the disease in infected individuals, it also reduces its rate of transmission.

Belgian-born Dr Michel Pacque, who first carried out tests of ivermectin with workers in a rubber plantation in Liberia several years ago, is now taking up an appointment as consultant for Sight Savers (Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind) in West Africa with the task of organizing regular supplies. He will be based in Bamako, the capital of Mali.

Dr Pacque's job will be to initiate and plan programmes for distributing ivermectin first in Mali, then in Guinea and Sierra Leone and later in other West African countries, including Nigeria. He will be working with national governments and voluntary agencies in the region.

Most of the countries concerned will need a radically reorganized system for delivering primary health care. Getting trained people to remote villages to administer the drug every year often along tracks churned up by the rain – will be a formidable task. The potential rewards could be considerable, but as with all new drugs it will be some time before it is clear that practical difficulties can be overcome and results justify early optimism.

Sight Savers

FOOD

Giant

Tanzania's monster cassava

LUKAS Safarimoja stumbled on a strange cassava plant while out hunting 36 years ago. Now in his eighties, he is worried that he will die before fellow Tanzanians appreciate the enormity of his discovery.

'This kind of cassava produces 20 times as much food as an ordinary one,' Safarimoja says proudly. Standing beside one of the giant tubers, its massive arms radiating out from a bulbous centre, he is dwarfed by its tallest limb. For seven years, Safarimoja kept track of the cassava, transplanting it to various places as he lived a nomadic hunting life. It was not until 1961, when he settled in a village, that he realized just how big it could grow.

One acre of Safarimoja's variety yields as much food as 15 acres of ordinary cassava,

says village agricultural officer Kombo Ahmed. Cassava is normally tolerant of a range of soil types, but this variety has proved more drought resistant than usual. The villagers of Visiga call Safarimoja 'The Saviour' because they credit his discovery with saving them from hunger.

'It is imperative that the nation should undertake detailed research into this cassava. It could mean a solution to the food shortages Tanzania always faces,' says Ahmed.

Michael Mashelle, regional agriculture and livestock development officer, says that although his department knows about the giant cassava, it has no funds for research. But Mashelle emphasizes the value of cassava to Tanzania and Africa as a whole, noting that it provides more than half the calorie needs of 200 million Africans.

The variety discovered by Safarimoja has been dubbed 'mkukumkuku' – 'by force' – because its massive size makes it difficult to uproot. This feature, Safarimoja says, helps prevent



Cassava: big, tough saviour.

theft: even wart-hogs find making off with it a challenge.

Lucas Lukumbo/Panos Features

Illustration: Steve Weston

GLOBAL WARMING

Oh America!

US stalls on greenhouse gases

AT the summit of the Group of Seven (G7) most powerful industrial countries in Houston, the leaders called on developing countries to reduce the destruction of tropical forests. But they were unable to commit themselves to cutting their own industries' emission of gases that threaten the world's climatic balance.

Annie Roncerel from the Climate Action Network pointed

out that 'Creating carbon sinks in developing countries through forestry programmes, without reducing carbon-dioxide emissions in their own countries at the same time, is the wrong signal from the G7 countries. This means the G7 are not willing to make their economies environmentally sustainable.'

The harshest criticisms were aimed at US President George Bush and not only from environmentalists. In a pre-summit letter sent to other G7 leaders in June, West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl had proposed internationally binding regulations with radical measures to limit greenhouse-gas emissions. But at

the summit Bush and US officials successfully scuttled these efforts.

White House Chief of Staff John Sununu objected on the grounds that a reduction in gas emissions would freeze US economic growth. He insisted that focussing on human activities to fight global warming was misguided because '96 per cent of carbon dioxide that flows into the atmosphere comes from natural sources'. Environmentalists likened Sununu's statement to former President Reagan's 1980 remark that air pollution was caused by trees.

Many European countries have agreed on national gas-reduction targets, leaving the US isolated in its refusal to cut its emissions.

Jan Laurens Brinkhorst, environmental director for the European Community (EC), noted that the US produces 25 per cent of the world's carbon-dioxide emissions compared to 13 per cent from all 12 EC nations, which together have an economy about equal to the US in size. As an example of US energy inefficiency, he said he had spent more time going to and from meetings during the Houston summit than in the meetings themselves.

Khor Kok Peng/Third World Network Features



President Reagan said trees cause pollution – Bush won't budge.

Photo: Hans Spruyt

SOUTH AFRICA

Ratners ends apartheid gold

Ratners, the giant British chain of jewellery stores, have agreed to stop selling jewellery made with South African gold. This comes after political pressure and picketing throughout the country by End Loans to South Africa and other anti-apartheid groups. The action had been taken after Nelson Mandela's call to intensify sanctions and for people to boycott South African goods in a final effort to end apartheid.

Ratners are the largest British retailers of gold jewellery with 31 per cent of the market and recently acquired a large retail chain in the US. Until now, they have bought most of their jewellery from Italy which sources 91 per cent of its gold from South Africa.

South Africa earns about 40 per cent of its export income from gold but produces only one-third of the world's sup-

plies. Until the Ratners decision almost all gold jewellery sold in Britain was made with South African gold.

Press release from End Loans to South Africa, c/o Methodist Church, 56 Camberwell Road, London SE5 OEN UK.

RACISM

Canada's backlash

Large lapel buttons have been selling across the country depicting a white man in front of three other men: an Oriental wearing a coolie hat, a Sikh in a turban and a black man clutching a spear. The caption reads: 'Who is the minority in Canada?'. The button is just one of several items attacking minority groups, according to an article in *Maclean's*. Others include a handbill in Manitoba saying that the game-hunting season has been cancelled due to an animal shortage. In place of the usual hunt, the handbill says, 'there will be an open season on Indians ... These welfare recipients must be thinned out every three years.'

From World Press Review, Vol 37 No 6

COMMODITIES

Cocoa conflicts

Cocoa is the third largest foreign-currency earner for Third World countries after coffee and sugar. It is exclusively produced in tropical countries and mostly consumed in the industrialized North. The cocoa trade provides a stark reflection of the power relations behind South-North trade.

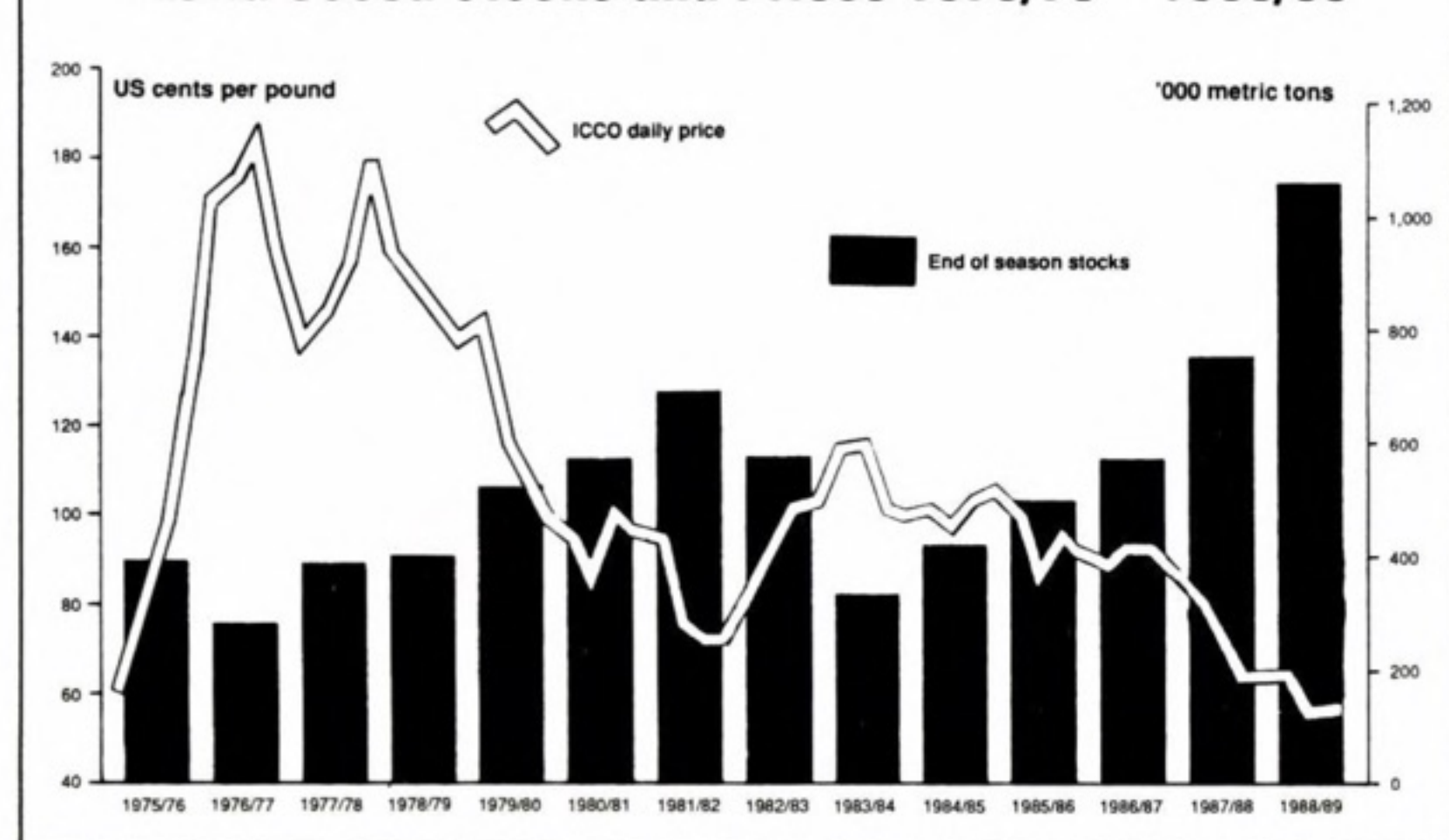
Until recently, West Africa was the pivot of the cocoa trade, producing the highest quality and the most beans.

However throughout the 1980s prices have declined in a glutted market. With prices at their lowest level for 14 years, small farmers are turning away from the crop, even though it is often their only source of income and their governments' only source of foreign exchange.

Without the foreign currency to service their debts, countries like Ghana, Ivory Coast, Gabon and Senegal face ruin, at a time when IMF-imposed austerity programmes appear to be stimulating social disorder throughout the region.

From Food Matters Worldwide No 6 1990

World Cocoa Stocks and Prices 1975/76 - 1988/89



JUNK FOOD

Delinquent poison

The removal of foods with excessive amounts of added sugar, artificial colourings and preservatives has worked a 'mini-miracle' on many children with severe behavioural problems. Hyperactivity and aggression was defused within days of radical diet changes, according to Dr Peter Mansfield in *Which? Way to Health*. Junk food, he said, could be affecting the behaviour of 10 per cent of children in the UK. Parents with problem children should stop them from taking canned drinks, coloured squash, sweets, biscuits and cake for a week.

From Which? Way to Health

COMMUNICATIONS

No more aphrodisiacs

The sale of non-prescription drugs promoted as aphrodisiacs has been banned in the US from January 8, 1990. Among the ingredients contained in these products are: anise, cantharides (or 'Spanish fly', a chemical derived from the dried bodies of beetles), estrogens, fennel, ginseng, golden seal, Korean ginseng, licorice, mandrake, minerals, nux vomica, sarsaparilla, strychnine and vitamins.

The US Food and Drug Administration has no evidence to show that any of the materials traditionally used as aphrodisiacs are either effective or safe.

Only male sex hormones, which are potent compounds associated with potentially serious side-effects, are known to influence libido.

From HAI News, No 52, 1990

THE SEA

Driftnet holocaust

Asia's driftnet fishing fleets may be slaughtering more than 100,000 dolphins a year in the Pacific Ocean, according to Greenpeace. 'It's what I would call an ecological holocaust,' said the leader of the Greenpeace ship *Rainbow Warrior II*. The ship is monitoring 20 driftnet boats from Japan and Taiwan in the

Tasman Sea between Australia and Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Environmentalists have dubbed driftnet fishing the 'Wall of Death' because the fine-mesh nets hang like deadly curtains for up to 50 km. In the North Pacific Ocean, Japan, Taiwan and South Korea have more than 1,000 of these vessels fishing at the height of the season. They set something like 50,000 km of net a night, enough to go around the equator one and a quarter times.

From Reuters, UK

ARMS TRADE

Down but not out

Within the next 25 years, about 360 nuclear-power plants throughout the world will be decommissioned or 'retired'. The question then arises 'What to do with them?' There is no definite answer to this question, says Cynthia Pollock Shea of the US environmental research group, Worldwatch Institute. 'Dismantling them will require special techniques not yet perfected, and new sites to store the radioactive wastes,' she warns. The total price tag is likely to range between \$63 billion and \$470 billion. 'Because many of the plant components are contaminated with radiation, the structures simply cannot be demolished with a wrecking ball,' said Cynthia Pollock Shea.

From Consumer Currents, No. 124 1990

"endquote"

'Tobacco kills two and a half million people a year worldwide: equivalent to two or three jumbo jet-loads a day.'

Dr John Roberts, WHO Tobacco or Health project

'BAT Uganda does not believe that cigarette smoking is harmful to health.'

British American Tobacco (BAT) Uganda in a letter to Uganda's Director of Medical Services.

'It is not a good idea to keep one's butler in service for as long as 70 years, as was the case of this servant. No wonder he was cantankerous. It is usually a good rule of thumb to retire them on a pension after say 60 years' devoted service, to be succeeded by their sons who have been under-butchers for some 30 years or so, thus making the transition as smooth as possible.'

Letter in the United Kingdom's Daily Telegraph.

Ugly magic

City-dweller Moiphebi Nkuebe goes to visit a witchdoctor – and brings home rather more than he had bargained for.

I AM not a superstitious man. However, I have tried to display some broad-mindedness when it comes to the subject of witchcraft. And it was in this frame of mind that I undertook the journey to visit a witchdoctor who reputedly had the ability to establish contact between a person and their ancestors.

One Saturday morning, without telling anyone of my plan, I boarded a bus and headed off out of the Lesotho capital of Maseru and towards Roma where I knew a witchdoctor lived. I got to my destination without much difficulty.

The witchdoctor's home was in a hillside village overlooking the National University of Lesotho. I imagined the witchdoctor would be living in a village of several *rondavels* surrounded by reed hedges. Instead I was directed to a three-roomed brick house topped with a roof of corrugated iron.

There I found a respectable-looking woman of middle age sitting on a sofa, sniffing tobacco. Greetings said, I sat down on the chair she proffered and explained the purpose of my visit. When I had finished she asked me to place a banknote in front of her and say '*lese-di*' which means 'illumination'. I did as I was bid and sat down again. She took a pinch of snuff in her hand and sprinkled it over the note murmuring something under her breath.

This little ritual lasted about two minutes after which she raised her eyes and calmly told me that my money signified 'death'. 'Death?' I asked in surprise – and with some degree of shock.

Being a healthy person, I immediately told myself this could not refer to me. But then I thought that perhaps an accident was awaiting me or one of my relatives. She stood up and went out of the room, while I pondered her ominous information.

She returned a few minutes later with an explanation that medicine was being prepared for me. In the meantime she briefed me on what to expect on confronting the 'mirror'. I grew a little apprehensive when she informed me that I would see witches and some ugly things, after which I would see my grandfather and other long-dead relatives.

The process then began. First I had to be cleansed – this meant drinking a lot of medicated water and throwing it up again. It proved to be a long and painful process, starting at nine o'clock in the morning and ending at around three in the afternoon.

Much weakened constitutionally, I passed on to the next stage. I was led into a dark room and told to lie face down on a mattress

on the floor. There was a small basin filled with water at one end of the mattress and I was told to gaze into it. I lay silently, expecting my grandfather to materialize in front of my eyes at any moment. The witchdoctor poured some milky medicine from a large bottle into a spoon and gave it to me to drink. It was thick and vile. Even after swallowing

it, its bitter taste lingered long in my mouth. While I was still gazing into the water basin, the doctor then covered me with blankets, enclosing me in total darkness. As she did this, she told me a chant I had to say over and over again.

'God of light and pervading wisdom, let there be light so that I can see.'

I wish to see my grandfather.

I wish to see the path of my life.

I wish to see the dark acts of my enemies.

I wish to see every witch who is trying to make my life a misery.'

I picked up the chant and repeated it many times. I chanted until I was tired but nothing happened.

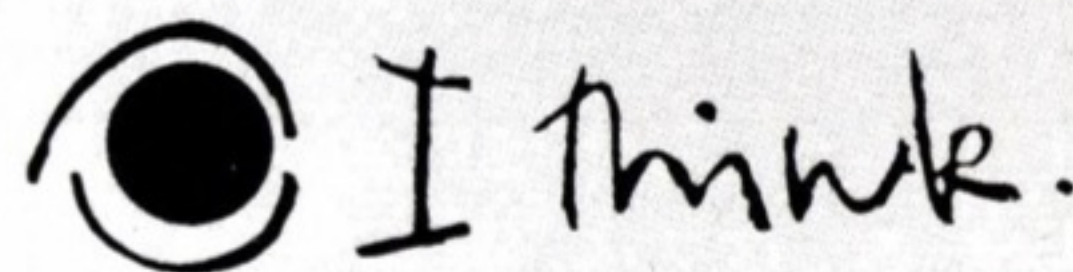
Throughout the doctor sat beside me and prodded me whenever I slowed. Eventually when I felt I could not take any more I threw the blanket off and sat up. At this point I was a little drowsy and the weakness in my joints had increased. I put on my shoes and jacket which I had been asked to take off and told the doctor I would visit her another time. She explained that with some people one had to wait a long time before one saw what one wanted to see. I left her, disappointed, weak and hungry.

As I sat in the bus on my way, strange things began to happen to me. Every object I looked at took on a new form and turned into ugly monsters.

I also saw faces of people I knew and had met in my life; they floated in front of my eyes one after another in an endless stream. When I eventually got off the bus back in Maseru I nearly collapsed, such was my weakness. At this point I was plunged into a world of terror in which voices were changed and objects were distorted. I was very scared. With great difficulty I reached home. After gobbling up whatever I could find in the house, I crept into bed and pulled the blankets over my head in a vain attempt to stifle the mocking voices and shut out the ugly visions. I wished I had been more patient and stayed at the witchdoctor's.

The next morning I woke up, and was relieved to find myself a normal man again ...

Moiphebi Nkuebe is a journalist working in Maseru, Lesotho.



by Martyn Turner





Right-wing 'family values' are taken to a logical conclusion.



The Handmaid's Tale

directed by Volker Schlöndorff

Canadian novelist Margaret Atwood's bleak view of an anti-feminist future was shortlisted for the Booker Prize in 1986. Now it has been made into a film by British scriptwriter Harold Pinter and German director Volker Schlöndorff.

The Handmaid's Tale projects a not-too-distant future in the US where the evangelical right wing has come to power and the themes of fundamentalist protest have become the dictates of the state. An epidemic of infertility caused by widespread toxic contamination means that known 'breeders' are herded together and eventually selected for insemination by the powerful. The main character (played by Natasha Richardson) is dragooned into serving as breeding stock for a childless couple in the evangelical-state hierarchy. Robert Duvall and Faye Dunaway as the couple do a marvellous job portraying the 'family/hearth' ruthlessness of those in control.

The film suffers from a lack of the social detail that made Atwood's feminist novel so credible. The ideological points are still there but it's hard to believe that totalitarian regimentation could be so tight. The unravelling of communism in Eastern Europe and the USSR has shown that if anything the notion of total control exercised by an all-knowing state has been badly overplayed by Cold

Warriors.

Still, the film remains a compelling update of Orwell's *1984* – and with the breakdown of Stalinism the notion of the fundamentalist Right as the prime totalitarian threat has a thoroughly contemporary flavour. **The Handmaid's Tale** is at its best in its frightening portrayal of gender politics and the depths to which people can sink when women are reduced to their biological functions.

Politics ☆☆☆
Entertainment ☆☆☆



Month of Pure Light

by Elizabeth Kemf (*The Women's Press UK*)

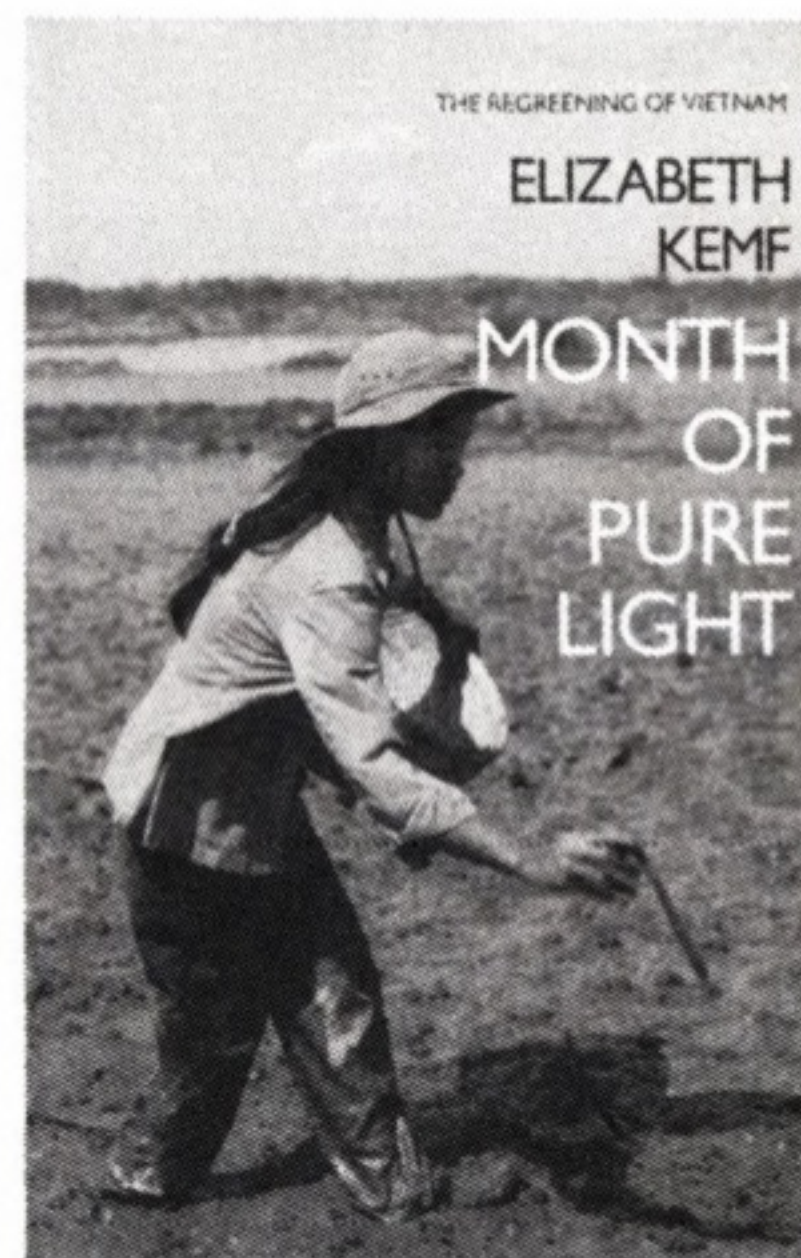
This remarkable book shows that happy conjunction of the personal and the descriptive which marks the best travelogues. But it is a travelogue with a difference. Elizabeth Kemf's journeys are all in the service of documenting the devastating effects that US bombing and chemical defoliation had upon the people and the environment of Vietnam – and the attempts to mend the damage. And while there is a fair slice here of the usual details of travel, of botched arrangements and chance encounters, the personal story is also much more worth telling than usual.

Elizabeth Kemf is an American now living in Switzerland and working for the Worldwide Fund for Nature. She first went to Vietnam in

1985 at a time when the country was still much more closed to journalists than it is now, full of enthusiasm that she was finally fulfilling a long-time ambition. Her visa had already come through when she found out that she was pregnant with her first child. The Vietnamese were appalled at the idea of a woman undergoing a trip in such a condition and in the end their forebodings proved justified: Elizabeth lost her baby.

She was to return four times, each time learning more about the ecology and the people. Despite its poverty and its international isolation, Vietnam has been making a unique attempt to restore its tropical forest, one-fifth of which was lost in 20 years of war and its own mistakes. And as Kemf witnesses more and more of the damage and the recovery for herself, she becomes closer to the Vietnamese friends who help her with her project, most particularly to Vietnam's most eminent environmentalist, Vo Quy.

But her personal loss echoes through her researches



to the end just as the tragedy suffered by the Vietnamese during the US War informs everything and everyone she meets. Recommended to anyone keen to delve beneath the stock images of this troubled but beautiful country.

Politics ☆☆☆☆
Entertainment ☆☆☆

The NI Food Book

by Troth Wells (*New Internationalist / Second Story Press*)

Chewing your way around the world is one of the cheapest ways to travel. And with the *NI Food Book* as your guide you should be reasonably sure of a safe landing. This is a collection of Third World recipes in a smart, rough and kitchen-friendly presentation which is combined with brief explanations of where the dishes come from – and a snappy history of food which you can ruminate on while waiting for your Indian banana fudge to set.

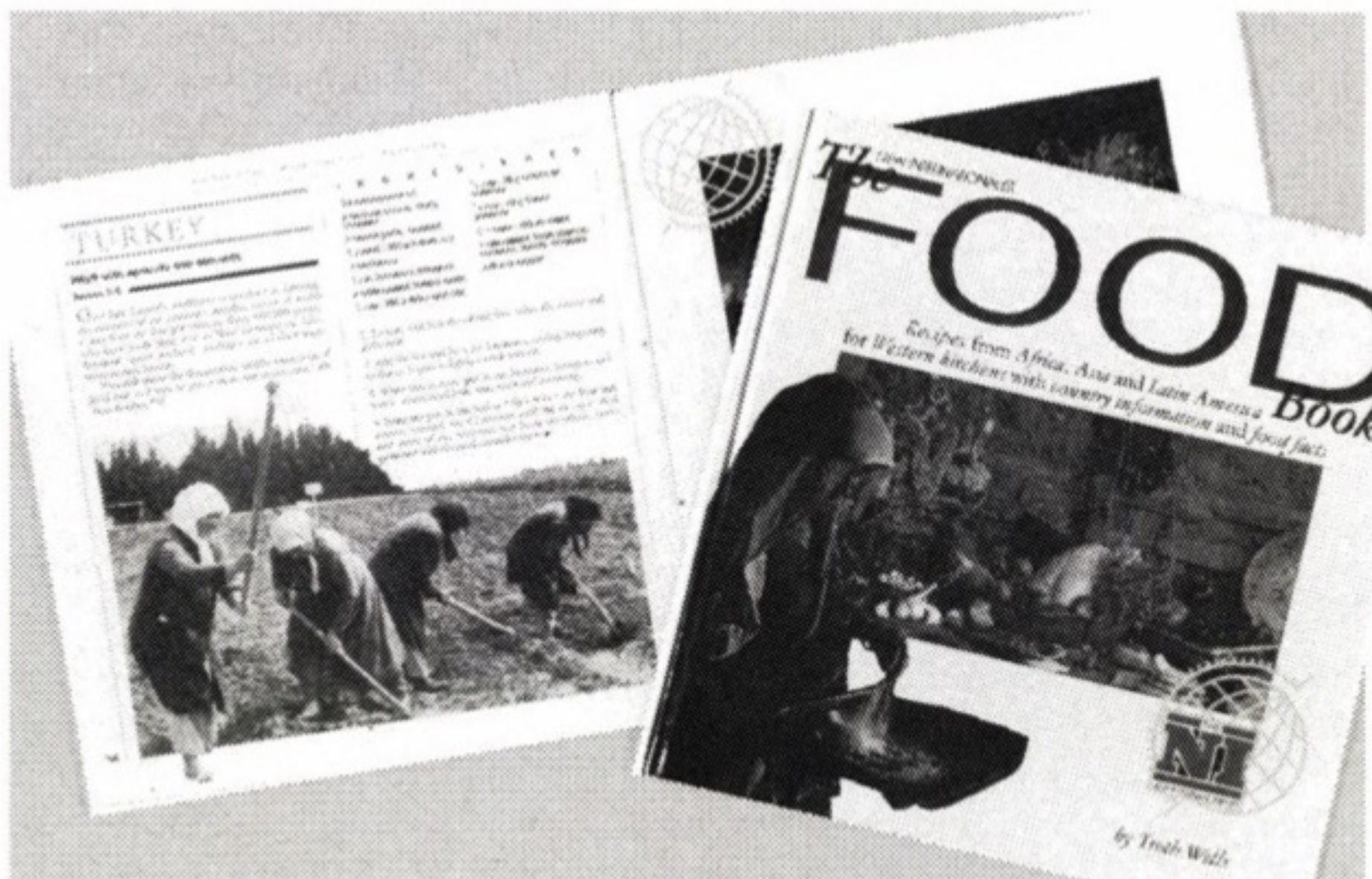
Classified by country and by course it's easy to find your way around – and ponder on which continent you should grace your culinary skills with next. Badjanan wya choban (Aubergine/egg-plant Casserole to you) from Syria is well worth a visit. Or Fish Stew from Brazil maybe or Cauliflower Salad

from the Dominican Republic (which is a 'colonial kickabout' according to the recipe's preamble – but this is an *NI* book so you can expect the usual political opinions).

There are plenty of photographs which you can smear with olive oil or crushed garlic (according to taste) just to show you've been there. Interesting explanations too of some of the ingredients. Cloves are the dried flowerbud of an Indian evergreen, apparently. Though to be told that turmeric is a 'rhizome of the ginger family' may send you scurrying for the dictionary.

Always an edge of danger of course with a new recipe. You could never approach Chicken Ramatoulaye (from Mali) with 100 per cent confidence but it looks straightforward enough. And Date Halva is probably one of the safest Iraqi experiences currently on offer.

Politics ☆☆☆☆
Entertainment ☆☆☆☆



MUSIC

Mama Mosambiki

by Eyuphuro (*Real World*)

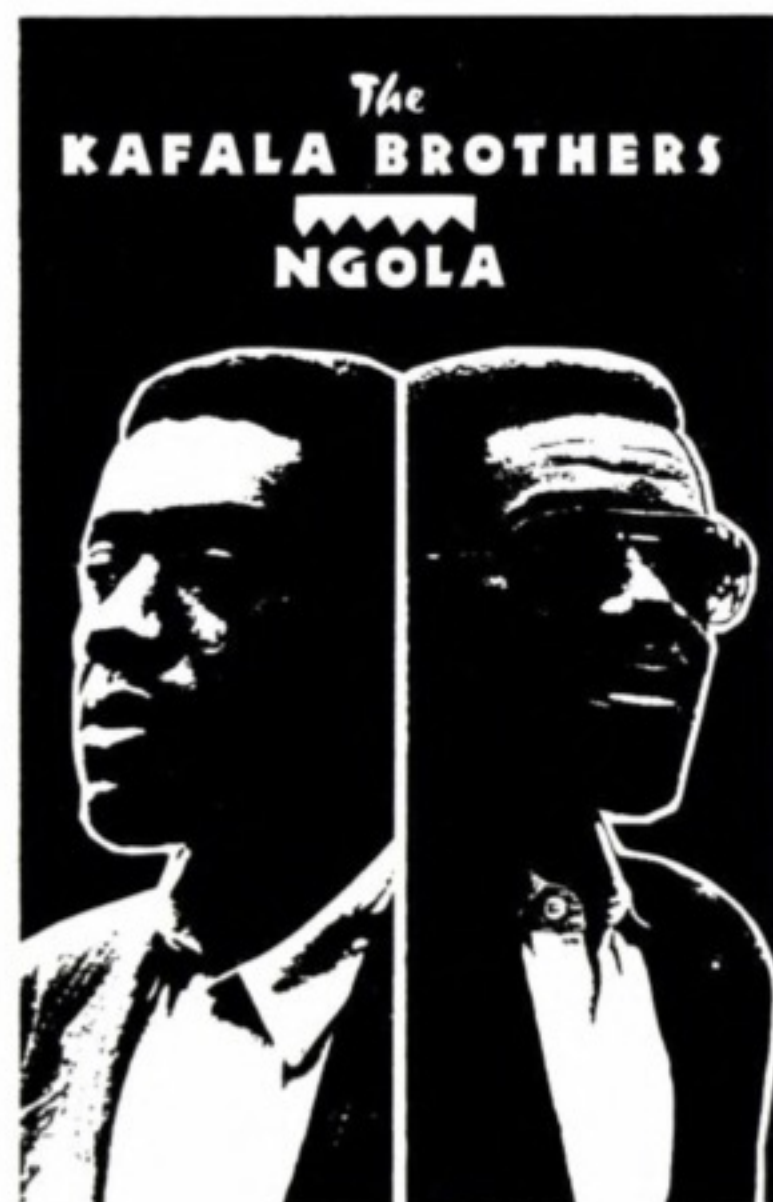
Ngola

by the Kafala Brothers (*AA Enterprises*)

Eyuphuro, from the Macua word meaning whirlwind, is an apt name for a band which whisks you away from the all-too-prevalent perception of Mozambique as a place of war, famine and refugees, to the image of a young and dynamic society.

Formed in 1980 and led by dual singer-songwriters Gimo Remane and Zena Bakar, the group has always made an effort to maintain the traditional rhythms of their home in Nampula province but also take inspiration from a cosmopolitan mix of Latin and Arab styles: the delicate lilting Portuguese-influenced guitar cuts across sliding Arabic rhythms.

Mama Mosambiki deals mainly with the social and cultural relations of men and women in modern Mozambique: it criticizes, for instance, the old traditions that leave a wife with nothing after a divorce and celebrates the resilience of women in the face of men's negative attitudes. This sympathetic focus on women is very refreshing. Eyuphuro's lyrics come



from a Mozambican context and from the heart.

Although they have chosen to deal with personal dilemmas, the songs in **Mama Mozambiki** can also be seen as metaphors for what is happening in a nation struggling to overcome years of civil war fuelled by South African destabilization. The Samukhela, people who are always harking back to the good old pre-independence days and want to emigrate, are addressed in the first song: 'But Samukhela when you get there you'll think of home – the home of Africa... you'll miss your mother you'll miss your father'.

The Kafala Brothers' debut album **Ngola** (the king of the Ndongo people and the basis of Angola's name) is a good point of comparison. Angola and Mozambique share many similarities: from their days of suppression under Portuguese colonial rule to the problems of post-independence South African aggression. And, like Eyuphuro, the Kafala Brothers have a cosmopolitan influence, blending traditional and urban styles and reflecting Congolese,

Zairean, Brazilian and Cuban rhythms in a combination of vocals, flute and guitar.

But in contrast to **Mama Mosambiki's** oblique approach, the Kafala Brothers have chosen in this album to sing directly about the cruelty and devastation of civil war in Angola. Their songs are sad and haunting tributes to their people's sufferings – 'the bitter taste of darkness' – making use of the hypnotic quality of traditional chants to moving effect. The overall result is a collection of beautiful and ironically harmonious expressions of pain which literally cry out for some of the vibrancy and hopeful energy of **Mama Mosambiki**.

Politics ★★★★★ (both)

Entertainment ★★★★★ / ★★★★★

★ STAR RATING

Excellent	★★★★★
Very good	★★★★
Good	★★★
Fair	★★
Poor	★

Reviews editor: Chris Brazier

CLASSIC

Max Havelaar

... being the book that inspired alternative trading

MAX Havelaar is today a top-selling brand of 'fair trade' coffee in Belgium and the Netherlands which guarantees that it is produced in the Third World under reasonable, non-exploitative conditions. But it was originally a best-selling nineteenth-century novel, a true story of corruption in the Dutch East Indies, now Indonesia, in which only the names were changed.

Eduard Dowes Dekker, the author, was a civil servant in the Dutch colonial service. Like Stanley Adams of the multinational Hoffman La Roche and Clive Ponting, the British civil servant who leaked embarrassing details about the Falklands War, Dekker was a whistle-blower. He told the public back home what many people knew but preferred for whatever reason to keep hidden.

He resigned after reporting the colonial oppression to his superiors and his novel took the Netherlands by storm when it was published in 1860. Havelaar, like Dekker in real life, was posted to a new province where he found widespread corruption. His predecessor, who was probably poisoned by the local Regent, had built up a dossier to be used against the Regent.

But when Havelaar reported the corruption his superior backed the Regent and Havelaar felt obliged to resign. Nobody wanted to hear about the forced labour, the theft of buffaloes and land taxes and the depopulation of the province.

Dekker himself wrote under a pseudonym, 'Multatuli', which is Latin for 'I have endured much'. But his novel was clearly autobiographical. The book shook the Netherlands because it revealed all too clearly how Indonesian spices, coffee and sugar enriched Holland but impoverished the local peasants. Dekker's charges, even dressed up as a novel, 'sent a shiver through the country', to quote a Dutch parliamentarian of the time. Dekker was eventually backed by an official inquiry but he was never reinstated.

Dekker objected to the illegal use of forced labour by local rulers to supplement their incomes. Peasants were taken from their own fields to work for nothing for the benefit of their colonial masters, even if this led to famine. The Dutch, like other European nations, ruled their colonies through local princes who had Dutch civil servants as 'advisors'. Both princes and advisers colluded to steal the buffaloes the

ants needed for ploughing and publicly caned or even murdered anyone who complained.

The novel's criticisms are very explicit. Havelaar complains to his superior, for instance: 'Your Excellency has sanctioned the system of abuse of authority, of robbery and murder, under which the humble Javanese groans... It has been heartrending to listen to complaints about maltreatment, exploitation, poverty, hunger... I am not at liberty to tell these poor people: "Go, and suffer still, for the Administration wishes you to be exploited".'

Max Havelaar speaks for himself in the novel though his letters and his sense of injustice, outrage and bitterness reflects the author's own feelings. But his story is carried back to Holland by Scarfman, so called because he is too poor to wear an overcoat. Scarfman, too, probably contained autobiographical elements, since Dekker himself travelled Europe in poverty after his return to Holland.

The naming of Scarfman after his own key characteristic is not the novel's only Dickensian element. There is also Droogstoppel, for instance (which roughly translates as 'dry as dust'), a hypocrite and bigot who trades coffee in Amsterdam and who prides himself on being 'a plain man'. 'All that moaning and groaning about buffaloes!' Droogstoppel says. 'What do they want buffaloes for, those niggers? I've never had a buffalo and I'm satisfied enough. Some people are always complaining.'

And then there is the Reverend Blatherer (*Wawelaar* in Dutch), who preaches about the 'heathen' in the East Indies. 'Out there live lost ones, stray sheep... who assert that it is enough to love wife and child and not to take from their neighbour what is not theirs.' Blatherer wants it made a condition of granting opium licences in Java that each opium den have a stock of Bibles.

Max Havelaar, which has been lucidly translated into English by Roy Edwards, resides firmly within the traditions of the nineteenth-century novel – it comes from an age when there seemed more time for digression and flowery language, though Dekker has a refreshingly direct style. At first sight something of a hotchpotch the novel is actually well planned, direct and at times deeply moving. It remains a damning insight into colonial oppression and an inspiration to those working for a fairer world.

And Eduard Dowes Dekker would have been more than pleased to find his brainchild remembered less as a dusty piece of literary history than as the inspiration for the idea of fair trade with the Third World.

John Tanner

Max Havelaar by Multatuli (Eduard Dowes Dekker), 1860, currently available in Penguin.

Jamaica

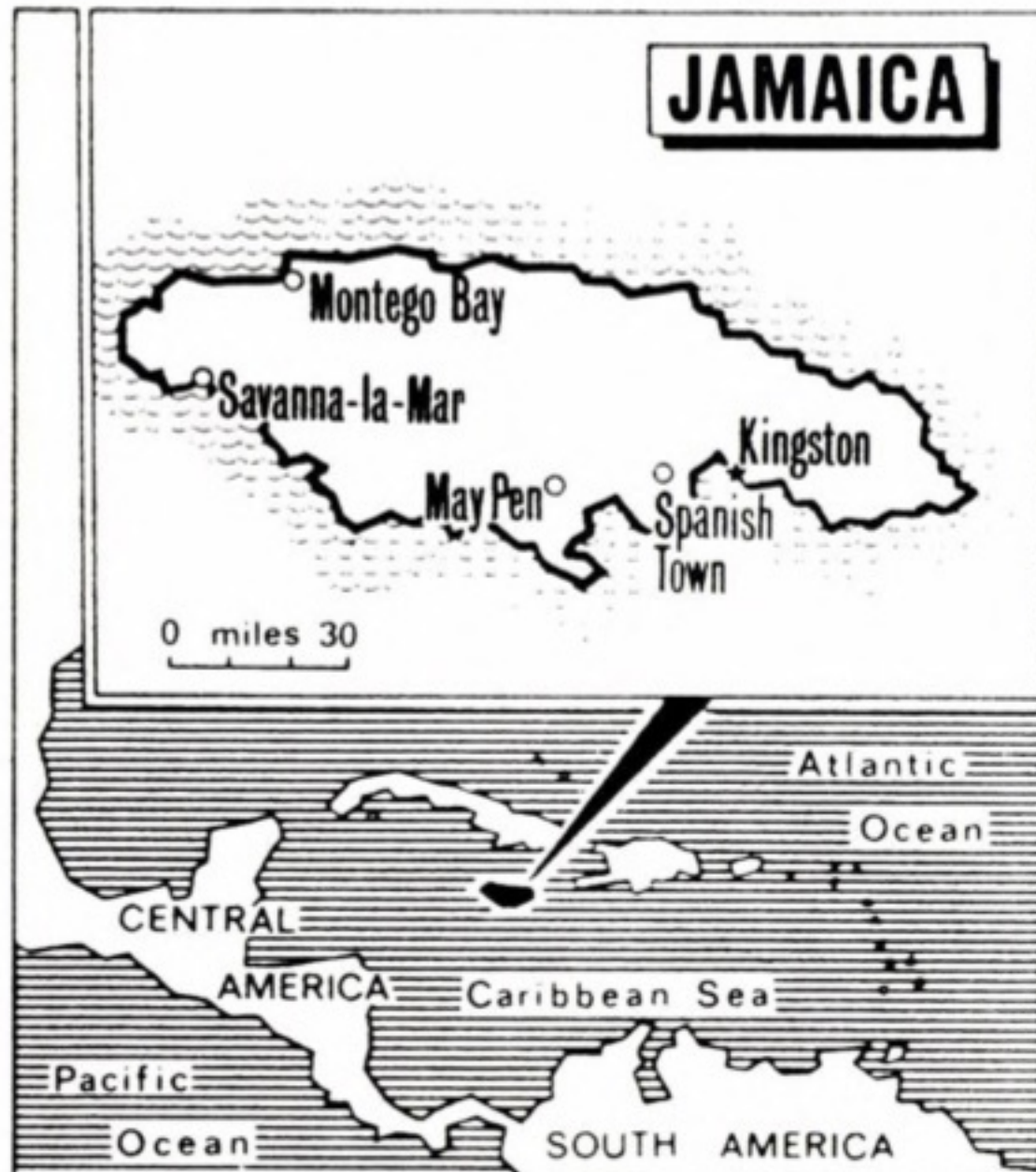


Photo: Peter Stalker

Leader Prime Minister Michael Manley
Economy GNP per capita US\$1,070 (US \$19,840)
 Currency: Jamaican dollar

Debt service as percentage of exports: 24.8%
 Exports: Bauxite is the main foreign-exchange earner followed by tourism and clothing, the latter produced by 'offshore plants' under special trade arrangements with the US. Agriculture is generally depressed.

People 2.4 million, 55% of whom live in towns
Health Infant mortality 11 per thousand live births (US 10 per 1,000)

Culture Over 80% are black descendants of African slaves. There is a substantial degree of racial mixture and shades of colour. Indians, Syrians, Chinese and Europeans are the main minorities.

Religion: The Church of England is no longer dominant. It now co-exists with Catholics, Baptists, Seventh Day Adventists and a variety of dynamic charismatic churches. Rastafarianism is particularly popular with young people.

Language: English and patois.

Sources: World Bank Report 1990 and The Americas Review 1990.

Last profiled in 1982



To the British, Jamaica was the 'key to the Indies' when they captured it from the Spanish in 1655. Three centuries of colonialism were then imposed on the peoples seized from Africa to work the plantations. Yet the Jamaicans emerged as the most culturally dynamic of all Caribbean peoples. In Kingston, as in the tourist strips of Montego Bay and Ocho Rios, the thump of reggae is everywhere.

Reggae is to Jamaica as calypso is to Trinidad. But whereas calypso now only rarely contains a political message reggae almost always does. For it was born out of a long history of protest. First there were brave and tragic slave revolts, recalled in folklore. Then there was the message of Marcus Garvey, whose writings and activities laid the foundations of what became Black Power.

Rastafarianism, or the building of a spiritual sense of Africa in oneself, was born in the horrors of the West Kingston slums. Deliverance is its message. 'There can be no liberation without revolution,' sang Bob Marley. But he died young and

other reggae singers such as Peter Tosh have been gunned down, a reminder of the violence just below the surface.

Social divisions are stark in Jamaica. Lifestyles copied from Miami and Fifth Avenue are enjoyed in closely guarded compounds well away from the misery of the slums. It seems that only music and Red Stripe beer unites Jamaican society.

Singers and poets alike have much to denounce. After over eight years of rule by the pro-US Jamaica Labour Party, a period marked by great hardship as the economy was forcibly 'restructured', the 1989 election returned Michael Manley's People's National Party. Popular expectations that 'Joshua' would lead Jamaicans towards a better future were impossibly high, especially after the devastation caused by Hurricane Gilbert in September 1988.

Manley stood for social justice despite the failure of his earlier administration in the 1970s which was derailed by powerful domestic and US opposition. But by 1989 Jamaica was heavily indebted, and Manley could not afford to antagonize Washington again. The textile industries that had sprung up in Kingston's poorer areas relied on cheap female labour. Their wages are held down as much by non-union agreements insisted upon by the Asian and American employers as by progressive devaluation. Agriculture remains neglected.

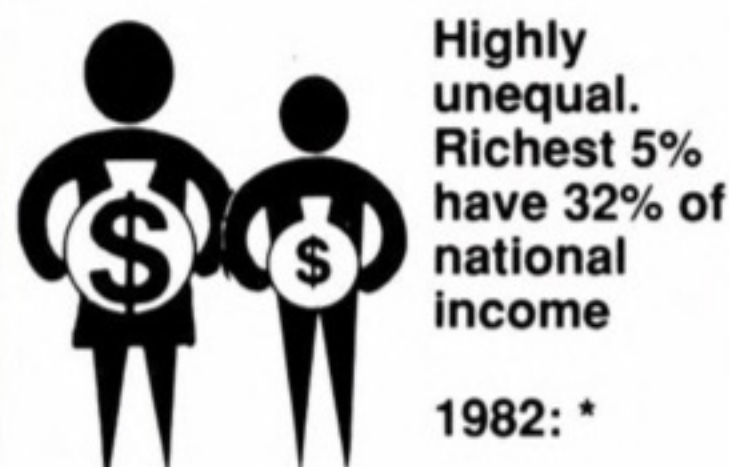
There are very few bright spots. The market prospects for bauxite are improving and the industry is being redeveloped. The tourist industry is booming. But little of the earnings trickle downwards: most of the foreign currency earned goes on imports of food and goods demanded by the predominantly white and affluent visitors. As in the days of slavery there seem to be two Jamaicas divided by class and colour. No wonder the island needs its music.

Tony Thorndike

At a glance



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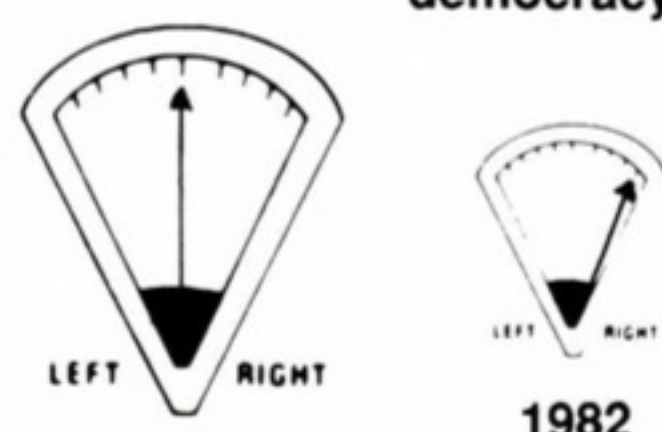


POSITION OF WOMEN ***

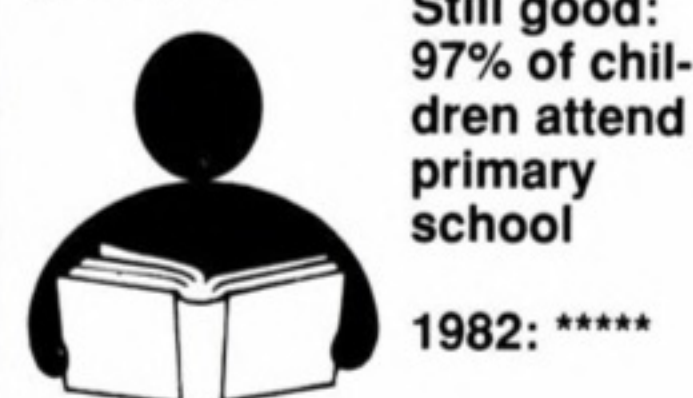


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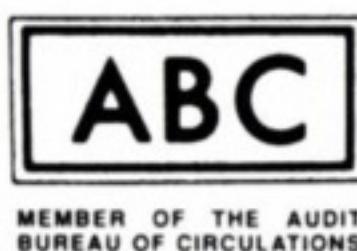
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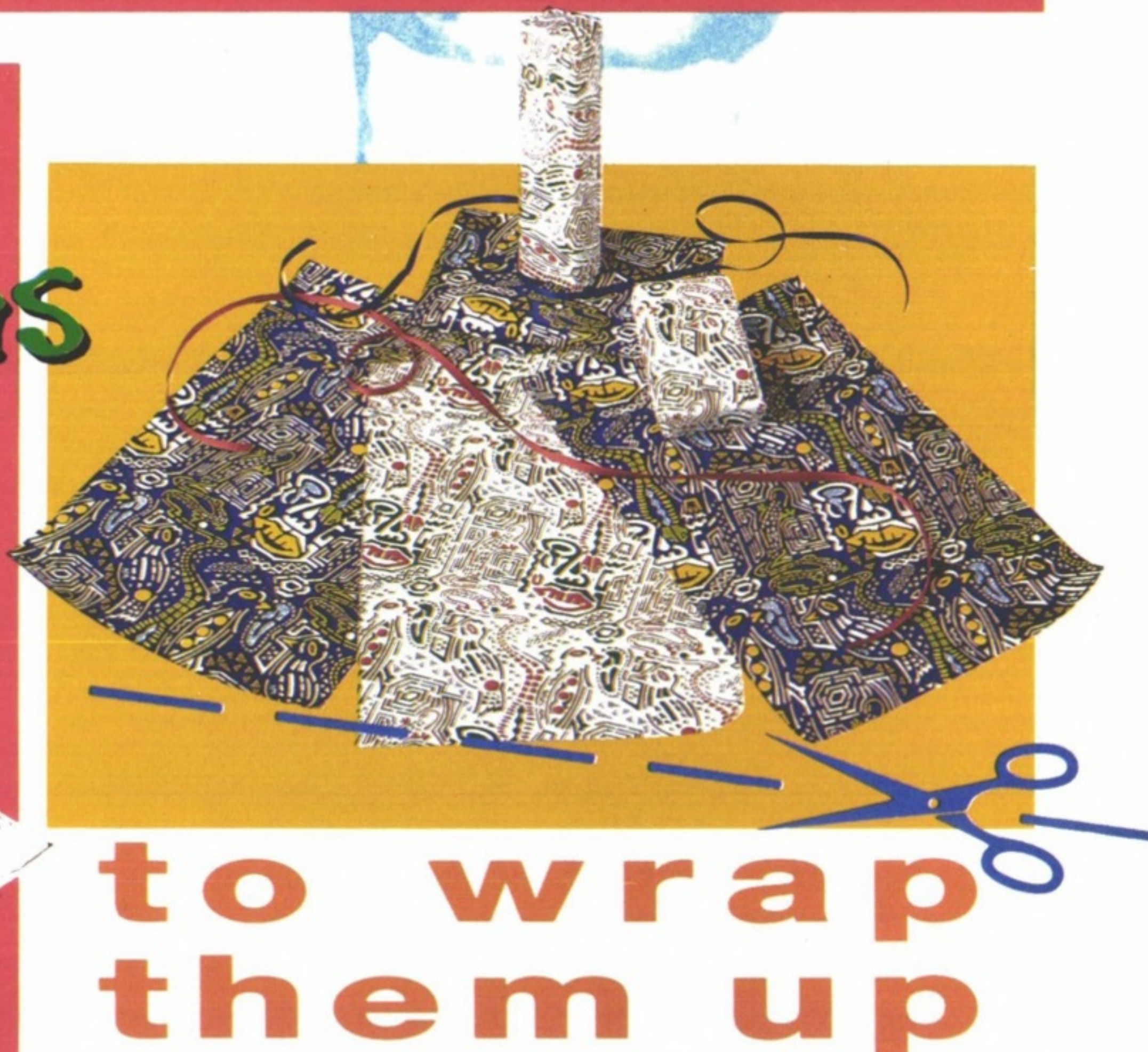
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